# LETTERS FROM MALABAR.

BY

# JACOB CANTER VISSCHER,

NOW FIRST TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL DUTCH:

TO WHICH IS ADDED

## AN ACCOUNT OF TRAVANCORE,

AND

## FRA BARTOLOMEO'S TRAVELS IN THAT COUNTRY.

BY


MAJOR HEBER DRURY,
MADRAS STAFF CORPS,
LATE ASSISTANT RESIDENT IN TRAVANCORE AND COCHIN.



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# PREFACE BY THE EDITOR.

The original volume, of which the following pages are a translation, came accidentally into my hands while at Cochin about two years ago, and imagining it might possess some interesting matter, I took it to England, and had it faithfully translated under my own superintendence. The present reproduction contains the entire work, with the exception of one or two chapters, relating to Java, and the Dutch dependencies of the Eastern Archipelago. These were purposely omitted, as they had no reference to the affairs of the Malabar Coast.

There can be little doubt that Dutch writings on the subject of the East are very numerous, though but little known to us; chiefly, of course, from the fact of their being sealed up in a tongue which few care to acquire in the present day. Yet, if we consider for how considerable a period of time the Dutch were masters of the Malabar Coast and Ceylon and what laborious writers and compilers they were, both at home and abroad when in the zenith of their power and prosperity, there must surely be many works which, if rendered available for the English reader, would throw much interesting light upon the administration of their Eastern possessions.

The early Dutch voyagers, such as Linschoten, Valentyn, Nieuhoff and others had their works published separately or collectively, and are numerous enough, but a few only have been translated into the English language.

When Dr. Claudius Buchanan visited Cochin in 1806 (see his Christian Researches), it is believed there were large collections of Dutch and Portuguese books to be found in Cochin, but which were subsequently destroyed wholesale. The present volume is probably one of the few which escaped the vandalism of those days, while many others may yet be lying in dishonoured obscurity. In addition to these "Letters from Malabar," I procured a MS. account of Cochin and Malabar, which was written by M. Adrian van Moens, who was the Dutch Governor of Cochin about 1772, and who appears to have been a man of considerable energy and ability. He greatly improved the fortifications of the place, and otherwise rendered great services to the town and its neighbourhood. This MS. is a large 4to. volume and is now among the Government Records in Cochin.

Of the Author of the "Letters from Malabar," I can find no account beyond what is in the preface of the Dutch edition. The name of Canterfisher is not unknown on the Coromandel Coast, and persons of that name, whom the present generation may recollect at Madras, were probably descendants of the Dutch author.

H. D.

TREVANDRUM,<br>*June* 1862.

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## EXTRACT FROM THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

I have been induced to write these Memoirs by the desire to relate the veracious circumstances of which I have either myself been an eyewitness, or which I have heard from trustworthy persons; for, all I shall say respecting the manners and customs of the Malabars I have drawn from the fountain head, namely, from the natives themselves, and particularly from such among them as are most thoroughly acquainted with them—their brahmins and lawyers. The task has cost me much labour and trouble, and a good deal of patience too ; for these people are very slow, and can only be forced to answer our enquiries by continual prompting.

The reader need not expect any description of the incidents which have happened to me, or a narrative of my voyages, misfortunes, the storms and such things, with which almost all books of travels are filled. My observations will bear only upon the manners and customs of the people, their laws, rites and ceremonies, the description of their kingdoms, as well as their origin and their modes of government, and other similar subjects.

I give these Memoirs the title of Malabar Letters, although they do not all concern that country, because I wrote them there and despatched them to my friends in Europe. I preferred this method of writing, because it gave me the opportunity to insert in this account of the Malabar people some other noteworthy circumstances. I conclude with expressing the hope that this little work may be of use to the reader, who is interested in the study of these subjects.

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## EXTRACT FROM THE DUTCH EDITOR'S DEDICATION TO SOME RIGHT HONORABLE LORDS AND LADIES IN HOLLAND.

The following pages contain observations upon that part of India which is called the Coast of Malabar, describing the nature of the country, the varieties of its inhabitants, and the manner of life in vogue there, both among the Dutch themselves and the heathens and mahometans.

My brother Jacobus Canter Visscher, at the time he wrote these letters to his friends at home, was Chaplain at Cochin, the chief town of that country; he lived there five whole years, during which time he had sufficient opportunity to examine into matters there. He was afterwards a Minister of God's Word at Batavia, in the Portuguese language. It would not become me in this place to expatiate upon his abilities, but your Excellencies will allow me to say simply, as a proof that he has been as accurate as it was possible for him to be, that from his youth upward he took delight in reading accounts of travels, and was filled by them with a strong desire himself to visit distant lands and nations, and to ascertain the truth or falsehood of other writers. This desire grew so irresistible, that, as soon as he had completed his studies, although he was by no means without hope of promotion in his native country, he accepted an appointment from the East India Company and gladly undertook the voyage to the East; the Divine Providence placed him at first in the not uncelebrated region of which he here gives the description.

These letters were not written merely for the edification of his friends and acquaintance, but with the view of publication at a suitable time; he kept a copy of them himself, and had arranged them in what appeared to him a natural order.

This copy having, since my brother's death, fallen into my hands, I have resolved to publish it; and have taken the liberty to dedicate it to your Excellencies, humbly begging you to receive it favourably. * * * * *

I remain, as I have always been,

Right Hon'ble Lords and Ladies,

Your humble and obedient servant,

C. T. VISSCHER,

*Chaplain at Pingjum.*

*16th August,* 1743.

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# LETTER I.

Situation of Malabar—Signification of the name—First colonization according to the Native legends—Difference between the Highlands and Lowlands—The stone found in Highlands—Cheapness of provisions—Neither volcanoes to be found nor earthquakes ever experienced here.

THOUGH the broad ocean, which rolls between the Netherlands and Malabar, presents a barrier to my personal enjoyment of your delightful society, it can neither extinguish my affection nor prevent me from holding communication with you by letter. I therefore dispatch this, as the first tribute of our constant friendship, in which I propose to relate the origin of Malabar according to the tradition of the natives.

This country of Malabar is situated about 10 degrees north of the Equator, stretching from Cape Comorin in the south to Mount Delli in the north. The inhabitants are called by us *Malabars*, by the Portuguese, *Malavares*, and by themselves *Mallealler*.* This word properly signifies *Mountaineers*, not that they dwell amid lofty mountains, for the greater part of the country, stretching along the sea coast, is flat and marshy; but the name must be derived from the original colonists, who were a mountain race.

Their legend, doubtless embellished by fiction, is as follows:—In by-gone ages, the sea washed the foot of a mountain range, which now lies 7 or 8 miles inland. The men who dwelt in the neighbourhood gained their subsistence by fishing along the mountain shores. Now it happened that there dwelt at Gocarna near Goa, a certain prophet universally renowned for sanctity, whose name was Paroese Raman. He, discovering to his sorrow that his aged mother had acquired an evil notoriety in the neighbourhood for her misdeeds, felt unable to endure the public shame she had brought upon him. At length, inspired by a divine impulse, he seized a rice winnow, and hurled it with tre-

* *Mala*, signifies a mountain, and *alam*, a district or country.—H. D.

mendous force from Gocarna right over the sea: by a wonderful miracle it was carried forward as far as Cape Comorin, upon which all the sea between the two places immediately dried up, and was transformed into that tract of level land, to which we now give the name of Malabar. The prophet resolved to take up his abode with his mother in this strange land, hoping here to find a hiding place for her disgrace. Meantime, the fishermen of the mountains, hearing of the miracle, flocked into these lowlands to seek for the seashore. The prophet met them, and, knowing that a land without inhabitants is waste and desolate, persuaded them to remain and settle there; and in order the more to attract them, he invested them with the dignity of Brahmins, promising at the same time to support them after his old custom, by which he was pledged to provide food daily for 3,000 of that caste. He then took the fishing nets with which they were laden, and tore them into strands, which he twisted together, to make the three cords which the Brahmins wear as a sign of their dignity tied in a knot on the shoulder, and falling down below the waist. These Brahmins of Malabar are called Namboories and are reproached by the other Brahmins, for their descent from fishermen.*

You will agree with me in treating this story as a mere fiction, but there is probably some foundation in fact for it, as there is for most fables: and any one who carefully examines these lowlands, will grant that formerly they must have been submerged under the sea. Not only do they lie so low, that like the coast of Holland they are under water in the rainy season, but they are in many parts broken up

* Another account of this tradition is as follows:—When Parashuramen was performing penance on the mountain Mahandra, where, after having gained twenty-one victories over the Kchettries, he had laid up all his arms, the chief munees or saints came to see him, and, having saluted him, advised him to cause the sea to recede, and to bring to light the land of Kerala, which had been submerged under the ocean in a former age. Parashuramen immediately went to the neighbourhood of Gokarnam and hurling an axe, recovered the land from the sea as far as to where the weapon fell. The limits are Cape Comorin on one side, and Gokarnam on the other. There are three divisions, that of Kerala, Tulu, and Heiga. From Cape Comorin to the river Kanyirota is the Kerala division. The middle portion from thence is the Tulu division. The last part is the Heiga division, the boundary of which is the river Bashpasetu. These three divisions embrace what is now called Malayalim. Parashuramen having thus created the land of Kerala, summoned the Brahmins from a foreign country, and made over the country to them, and giving chief authority to them over the employments and occupations of the four castes, namely, the Brahmin, the Kchettry, Veishya and the Sudra, he rested from his work.—H. D.

into islets by the waters of the sea, which flow in channels between them, and into which the rivers from the mountains empty themselves. May we not then suppose that this low and broken land is washed over entirely from time to time? We know that in some European countries the sea encroaches on the land, and in other places recedes. It is true, no doubt, that many parts of the shore are elevated. Nearly the whole coast from Kully Quilon to Ponany is low and broken up by numerous watercourses, but the coast of Quilon is steep and rocky, or rather it is merely a rock covered with a stratum of soil; so that here it would seem the land can never have been under water. While I am on the subject of this rocky district, I must add that the stone is very well adapted for building. There are quarries here from which the stones are hewn; and I have seen the stone when well cut from the rock, split like wood under the stroke of the axe. The stoneis reddish yellow and spotted,* very porous and full of holes, in which the lime used in building, gets mixed up, and the whole becomes so well consolidated, that old stone is often preferred to new.

The East India Company find this stone very serviceable for erecting their fortresses and factories, and the inhabitants use it in building their houses.

But to return from this digression. I must inform you that the variety of soil here causes a marked difference in its fertility. It is true, generally speaking, that the pleasant champaigns and sweet clover fields with which Holland abounds, are not to be found here, nor is it the case that the fields are clothed with many coloured flowers, breathing sweet fragrance, as the poet Antonides has it, in his poem on the river Y†.

> "The fruitful Cochin, where sweet blossoming May,
> "For ever decks the earth with livery gay."

This is poetical license deviating far from the real truth, as, commonly, the vegetation is but thin and scanty, and the fields are any thing but rich in flowers. It is true, indeed, that the low sandy tracts are more fertile than the more elevated and rocky districts, for while these yield nothing but trees, and tree fruits, the former contain vast expanses

* Laterite, below which is found limestone and lignite. The cliffs rise to nearly 250 feet in some places.—H. D.

† Antonides van der Goes, a Dutch poet who flourished in the seventeenth century. His principal work was a poem on the river Y, or the "Ystroom." See Foreign Quarterly Review, Vol. iv. p. 57.

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of rice fields, which are so productive that they suffice to furnish rice not only for the whole of Malabar, but also for exportation. It is curious that so dry a plant as rice grows in the water. In fact, the natives sow the *nely* in the low lying meadows, at the time when they are a foot or two under water, scattering the seed in the water, through which it sinks to the earth, and there takes root; when about a foot high the seedlings must be transplanted.

Provisions are all cheap here, especially rice and meat. A pig can be bought for a dollar, a good calf for half a dollar, a fowl for 10 cents. This must be attributed to the habits of the natives, among whom it would be considered a sacrilege to eat beef—merely to kill a cow being a crime punished by death without mercy. Some castes are permitted to eat other meats, but it is little done; the Brahmins have a mortal abhorrence of animal food, and make use of nothing that has had life.

Upper Malabar is very elevated, and contains many mountain ranges rising one behind the other. It boasts few mineral productions, except iron, which is beat out in small bars and exported to Mocha. There are no volcanoes in this part of the world, nor are any serious convulsions of the earth known. Indeed there has never been an earthquake within the memory of man, while, in the countries lying further to the East, both volcanoes and earthquakes are most common.

# LETTER II.

On some disorders indigonous to the country and the causes of them—The distinction of seasons, and the effects thence arising.

THE great respect I entertain for your judgment causes me to take up my pen with diffidence, being aware that my letters are not worthy to meet your eye; but I trust to your kindness to overlook their deficiencies, and to be satisfied with my desire to inform you of all that I have observed in these distant lands.

I remember to have read in certain books of travels that there are men to be met with in the Alps whose necks are covered with swellings, and that the inhabitants look upon them as ornamental.* Similar swellings are often to be seen on persons in this country; but here the disorder generally attacks the legs, and other parts of the body besides.† The disorder always begins with a fever, which they here call the raging fever, which sometimes causes delirium, and as the strength of the malady increases, great pain is felt in the legs or in other parts attacked: the fever then settling in the suffering part, causes it to swell in a frightful manner. In the commencement of the disorder, the swellings subside again, but as the fever returns, at intervals of one or two months, or a longer period, they reappear and become per-

* The author alludes to the goitre or bronchocele. The classical reader will recollect the line in Juvenal (Sat. xiii. 162.) Quis tumidum guttur miratur in Alpibus? The sufferers were called 'Gutturosi.' It was formerly supposed that this glandular swelling only appeared in certain countries, such as Switzerland and Savoy, and that its origin arose from drinking snow water. It is however found in certain districts of South America, Sumatra, and even in Great Britain, especially in Derbyshire, from whence it has been called the "Derbyshire Neck." Its origin is very obscure, but as it prevails in countries, both where snow exists and where it does not, drinking snow-water can no longer be asserted as the cause of its appearance.—H. D.

† Elephantiasis or Cochin Leg. This prevails to a great extent among the inhabitants of the Western Coast; nor has any certain remedy hitherto been discovered for the diseased part, short of amputation. It is more than probable that bad water and bad diet, are the remote causes of it.—H. D.

manent; so that men have been found with legs as thick as my waist and other frightful swellings.

This malady cannot be ascribed to any particular nation or race of men. I remember to have read that it attacks only the St. Thomas' Christians, and that they may be known by this mark; but nothing can be more absurd than such a notion, for we see every day people of all kinds, men and women, Mahometans, Heathens, and Christians, and even Europeans who reside here, attacked by it. You, who have given your mind to the investigation of nature, will no doubt be able to give a sufficient reason for these facts: but I trust you will have the goodness to weigh my opinion, which may possibly assist in the explanation.

I believe that the cause of the disorder is in the water and the soil, and partly also in the air, which is filled with vapour drawn up from the water. It appears that in the low lying parts of Malabar in the neighbourhood of Cochin, the earth is full of saltpetre or some other substances, which mingle with the water of the pools or rivers near the sea coast; and the people who constantly drink this water acquire a disorder and fever which causes at first shivering, and then drives the particles which occasion the fever into a certain part of the system. These particles being sharp and pungent, cause great pain, and at last distend the small vessels in the afflicted region, which after the first access of the complaint, subside again, but after fresh particles have been driven in by fresh fevers, the enlargements not only remain fixed but increase in size. On the legs thus deformed, the flesh becomes loose and spongy; but this makes them light also, so that however enlarged they may be in size, the patients can walk with great ease.

These remarks of mine seem to be strengthened not only by the taste of the water of these lowlands, which is brackish and unpleasant, but by actual experience; for the people who are in better circumstances, and can get their water higher up, from the river Mangatti, are seldom visited by this disease, while on the other hand those who drink the water of the neighbourhood suffer from it much. On this account the E. I. Company has wisely ordered that this water should no longer be given out to the garrison, but water from the Mangatti instead; and it has been observed that the malady has been much less prevalent among the troops since that time. I must add that the juice of the young cocoanuts is also very deleterious; and my neighbour

said that he himself had caught the disorder from that cause. The reason is plain: for we know that the vessels of the cocoanut palm are of great width, so that it imbibes water from the earth just as it is, without detaching it from the particles of saltpetre; and in this state the fluid enters the young nut, the interior of which contains nothing but a sort of water rather sweet in taste, and consequently it gives rise to the same disorder as the water of the wells.

I am so fortunate as never to have suffered from this disease; though I could not escape another, which the natives term *Mal-de-terre*, which attacked me almost every month, beginning with great uneasiness and pain in the bowels, and ending with violent sickness and diarrhœa. The Indians have a curious remedy for it, which is to take a hot iron and burn the soles of the feet with it. This often has a good effect.

Not to detain you any longer with these painful topics, I shall now turn to descriptions of other natural phenomena, and proceed to relate briefly the courses of the seasons in this part of the world.

One hardly finds here that difference of seasons which is experienced in Europe: for neither are heavy hailstorms,* nor thick falls of snow, nor hard frosts, ever seen or felt in these parts. One must divide the year into two *Monsoons*,† or seasons, the one being the period of dry weather, the other the period of rain. The dry season may be divided again, first into a temperate season, when the air is tolerably cool: this begins in November, when the atmosphere is bright and clear; the S. E. landwinds then begin to blow, attaining their greatest force in January and subsiding again in February. They blow every morning during this period,

* Hailstorms have occasionally occurred in these districts, though they are of very rare occurrence. One of unusual severity occurred only last month (April 1862) in the town of Cochin itself.—H. D.

† A knowledge of the monsoons may be traced from very early ages. Humboldt says that Alexander's companions were not ignorant of the existence of the monsoons, by which navigation was so greatly favoured between the Eastern Coasts of Africa and the North and Western parts of India. After having spent ten months in navigating the Indus between Nicæa on the Hydaspes and Pattala, with a view of opening the river to a universal traffic, Nearchus hastened to sail from Stura, at the mouth of the Indus at the beginning of October; since he knew that his passage would be favoured by the N. E. and Eastern Monsoons in the same parallel of latitude. The knowledge of this remarkable local direction of the winds, subsequently emboldened navigators to attempt to sail from Ocelis on the Straits of Babelmandeb, cross the open sea to Muziris (south of Mangalore) the great Malabar emporium of trade, to which products from the Eastern shores of the Indian peninsula, and even gold from the distant Chryse (Borneo?) were brought by inland trade.—(COSMOS.)

and are found by experience to be prejudicial. After this follows the hot season, when, the wind ceasing, the air becomes exceedingly sultry, especially in the forenoon and at night, because there is not the slightest breeze to cool it; whereas, in the afternoon, there is often a wind from the sea. In the month of May the season begins to change. The heavens become overspread with heavy clouds, and violent storms of thunder and lightning occur. I cannot find that these storms cause so much damage as among us in Holland, the cause of which I take to be the rarefaction of the air through the continued heat of the sun, so that the thunder and lightning finding less obstruction, become more easily diffused and fall to the earth with diminished force. The rainy season sets in at the end of May or beginning of June, and lasts till October, bringing perpetual storms of rain, often accompanied by violent winds. It would be well worth the trouble of any philosopher to enquire into the cause of this rainy season; and I consider it my duty to speculate upon it, because the phenomena afford some clue to the decision of the question.

In the hot season we find that the wind blows entirely from the North and West: on which account ships then coming from Persia and Surat have a speedy voyage. It is also certain that as, during that time, the powerful action of the sun causes a quantity of vapours to accumulate in those regions, and rain falls there as little as it does here, therefore the N. W. wind must drive those vapours in a south-easterly direction, till they meet the mountain ranges which are a barrier to their further progress. These mountains are the same which stretch from Cape Comorin through Asia. Now the vapours, as they approach these mountains, get more and more condensed: till at length, in the month of May, they are forced down by violent winds, then rebound again, and finally descend in rain on all places situated west of the chain. That these mountains are the true cause of the rainy season appears from the circumstance that when the rainy season sets in on this side of the chain, on the other side, just at the same time, the dry season begins. Hence we are frequently astonished to find that in two places on opposite slopes of the same mountain, one has the rainy and the other the dry weather at the same time: and when, on our side, the rains leave off and the S. E. winds begin to blow, just then the rains commence on the Coromandel Coast.

And while we are on the subject of the weather, I must

observe that, in these countries, storms do not last so long as with us in Holland; for, while, there, we often know them continue without intermission for two or three days, here, on the contrary, high winds never maintain their violence beyond an hour or two, when a calm ensues, after which the wind rises again: resembling in this circumstance the sudden whirlwinds (*Travades*) which navigators encounter in the tropics, and chiefly near the Equator. These storms come on very quickly, and generally end as suddenly. First, a small cloud is seen, which increases rapidly, and then, whirled onwards by a strong wind, bursts in heavy rain. It is very curious to observe how suddenly the clouds gather in the midst of a clear and hot atmosphere. It would seem that some vapours in the lower portion of the atmosphere are prevented by the powerful action of the sun's rays from collecting together; then, driven up higher than usual, they encounter a cooler stratum of air, by which they are condensed together with all the other vapours that meet them by the way (like the steam condensed on the lid of a tea-kettle); then, urged forward like an ever-increasing snowball, by the force of the wind and the heat of the sun, they become overcharged with weight, and finally precipitate themselves to the earth. A description of this kind of storm or something like it seems to be given us in 1st Kings xviii. 44, 45:—"Behold a little cloud no bigger than a man's hand rose out of the sea.........and it came to pass in the meanwhile that the heavens were black with clouds and wind, and there came a great rain."

In conclusion, I will note the effects of the rainy season on our roadstead. This it closes up entirely and chokes with sandbanks, on which the repelled waves break with violence. These sandbanks begin to form in the month of May, and are washed away in September and October. Their formation and their destruction are owing partly to the action of the river, and partly to that of the sea; for, at the commencement of the season the river empties itself with great impetuosity into the sea, dragging with it a quantity of sand: on the other hand, the waves of the sea acting in the opposite direction, stop the progress of the sand just where the two bodies of water break upon each other. This is the reason why the sandbanks at that time are constantly augmenting; but, when the force of the sea subsides, and the river has still a vast weight of water to carry down, then the sandbanks are washed away again.

# LETTER III.

Description of Cochin and Calicut—Conduct of the English there.

I must now give you a description of Cochin,* the place where I am settled. It was wrested, as you are no doubt aware, together with other forts, from the Portuguese, by the arms of our East India Company. During the war with that nation, in the year 1662, the Admiral Ryklof van Reede was despatched from Batavia with a fleet to besiege this town; but the Governor defended it with so much resolution that the attempts of the Admiral were foiled, and the mortality among his men compelled him to retreat. The courage of the gallant sailor was not cooled by this failure. At the close of the same year he returned with a fleet, and after some conflicts a captain named Pierre du Pont succeeded in making himself master of one of the gates; upon which the Governor Ignatio Sarmento capitulated, being allowed to march out with his troops and baggage, and with all the Portuguese inhabitants with their false gods and images. This conquest took place on the 8th of January 1663; and the anniversary is still celebrated by a sermon in the morning, and in the evening by the display of banners and discharge of guns from the walls.

The principal founders of Cochin† were Francisco and

* In John Nieuhoff's "Remarkable Voyages and Travels into the best provinces of the West and East Indies," we find the following description of Cochin, under the date 1662.—"Some authors make mention of two different Cochins, "viz.: the old Cochin, lying about a league and a half from the sea-shore. The "Portuguese call it *Cochin Daçima*, or Higher Coohin, because it lies higher "up the river; by the Dutch it is called *Cochin Malabar*, where the king keeps "his residence, being situated upon the banks of a river, and pretty well peopled "and adorned with several goodly structures and pagodas. The other, called "New Cochin, is scarcely a league from the sea, and was in the possession of 'the Portuguese."—(Trans.)

† Cochin is a sea-coast town, the capital of the principality of that name. In the Malayala language it is called Cocci: deriving its name from a small river which formerly emptied itself there into the sea. In the year 1341, the sea

Alphonso Albuquerque, who visited this country in 1504, in the reign of King Emanuel of Portugal. It was afterwards much enlarged and beautified under Vasco, so that it became one of the wealthiest commercial towns in the Indies, and was erected into an Episcopal See by the Roman Pontiff. The Portuguese have still a titular Bishop of Cochin, whose residence is at Goa or near Quilon; but he does not possess the slightest authority here. This town formerly contained handsome churches, but they have been either demolished, or converted into magazines. The Church of St. Francisco alone remains, and is used for our reformed service; while the Roman Catholics perform their services outside the city, having several churches scattered over the country. Before it fell into the hands of the East India Company, Cochin must have been a considerable town, as is proved by the remains of buildings which are everywhere to be seen; but, since that time, it has become much less prosperous, in consequence of the restrictions imposed by the Company upon its commerce, which, under the Portuguese, had been entirely free, with the exception of the titles due to the Rajah. The town is situated at the mouth of a noble river abounding in fish, with pleasant well wooded banks, and studded with many islets which are planted with cocoanut palms. If wealthy persons ever settled here, as they do in Batavia, they might lay out very pretty villa residences and gardens upon these shores.

threw up the small island of Vaipeen on the north side of Cochin. The waters breaking through the banks of the river Cocci, swept away the village, and formed a large river and back-water, and so spacious a harbour, that large ships can lie safely at anchor in the river on the North-east side of the town of Cochin. Vaipeen is thirteen miles long, and one broad. The natives date their era, from the period of its origin. It is called the *Poodooveypa*: from two Malayalum words *poodoo*, new, and *veypa*, foundation.

Bartolomeo says, "Cochin is a beautiful city, built by the Portuguese, in the tenth year after the arrival of Vasco-de-Gama at Calicut. In 1663, it was besieged by a Dutch fleet under the command of Peter Van Bitter, and C. Valkenberg, who made themselves masters of it, and who carried off from it a great deal of riches. After that period the beautiful cathedral was converted into a warehouse for the Duch East India Company. It is intersected by beautiful streets: the arsenal is well provided with all kinds of military stores, and the citadel is strongly fortified. The latter in the year 1778, was supplied with new ditches, bridges, batteries and bastions, under the direction of the Governor Adrien Moens."

This Adrien Van Moens has left a MS. account of Cochin including its history, trade, manufactures, the customs and religion of the people, &c. It forms a large volume and is now among the Government Records of Malabar, and is undoubtedly, a document full of interest and information.—H. D.

As regards the fortifications, they are sufficient to protect the town against the natives, who do not understand the science of besieging, the methods of bombarding, &c.; but they would not be strong enough to resist a large European force, especially as the garrison, consisting of only 300 men, is inadequate to man the walls.

The circumference of the town is tolerably extensive. It would take a man a good half hour to walk round the walls; but the space enclosed by them contains several unoccupied portions. The streets are regular enough, but the houses are quaint, and built after the old Portuguese fashion. Each apartment has a separate roof. The dwelling rooms are not level with the ground, but you mount several steps to reach the hall, which is the first apartment of the house: underneath are empty chambers, in which probably the Portuguese lodged their slaves, or stowed away their goods. Most of the rooms in the common houses are plastered, after the Hindoo custom, with cow dung, which serves for paving, and is renewed every week. They say here that such floors are much more wholesome than stone ones; it is certain at least that they retain the dampness in the rainy season.

The town of Cochin is inhabited by Christians, for the Heathens are not allowed by their own laws to dwell in it. The inhabitants comprise, however, different classes: there are the native Christians, the Topasses, and the Europeans; the last, who form the most considerable portion of them, comprising also the mixed race, sprung from European fathers and native mothers. This is the class chiefly employed in the service of the East India Company, though they seldom rise to higher offices than that of book-keeper.

There is a very commodious roadstead at Cochin, in which several ships from all parts of the world annually cast anchor; as Malabar, situated as it were in the centre of the East Indies, is a convenient station for vessels to refit and take in water, fuel, and provisions (which articles are good and plentiful here) before continuing their voyage, vessels from Batavia to Mocha, or from Persia and Surat to Batavia, touch here, as well as French and English ships on their way to and from their Indian settlements. It is also frequented by Moorish vessels. It is true that none but small craft can enter the river, on account of the sandbanks, above which there are not more than eleven or twelve feet of water; and, in the rainy season, large ships

cannot remain in the roadstead; but, about four leagues from Cochin is a bay called Muddy Bay,* where they may lie securely in the mud.

Next to Cochin I shall place the capital of Malabar, Calicut,† which has been made famous by Portuguese books of travels, and also by its being the seat of Government of the Zamorin. This town is called by the natives *Karrekovre*, which signifies *hencoop*. The reason they give for this name is that when Cheramperumàl divided his kingdom, he gave to the Zamorin for his share only so much land as the sound of a cock crowing from its perch could be heard over. You must not suppose that this town is in any way to be compared with those of Europe, or that it comes up to the exaggerated descriptions of the old Portuguese travellers. It possesses neither walls nor fortifications of any sort, but is built irregularly along the shore. In the bazaar or market place alone is there any order in the arrangement of the houses. These, which are mostly built of stone and covered with the dried leaves of the palmyra tree, are of so miserable a description that they can be compared to nothing one sees anywhere else. Being a free port, Calicut is frequented by various races. Among the

* Mud Bay or Muddy Bay, is the commercial port of Alleppie in the kingdom of Travancore, 36 miles south of Cochin, remarkable for the singular natural break-water formed in the open sea, consisting of a long and wide bank of mud, the effect of which is so completely to break the waves, that ships of all sizes can securely anchor even at the stormiest season of the year in the open roads, where the water is perfectly calm. The origin of this deposition of mud, has never been satisfactorily accounted for. It imparts a dirty colour to the water and makes it thick and slimy. It has shifted more or less within the last century, but not to any great extent. A similar deposit exists at Narrakul about 20 miles north of Cochin, and the advantage of this latter place, as a natural open harbour for shipping, has recently been brought to the notice of the British Government.—H. D.

† The well-known city of Calicut, which has experienced such a variegated fate, lies on the sea-coast, in the latitude of 11° 15′ north. It consists partly of houses constructed of teakwood, and partly of huts composed of palm branches interwoven through each other, and covered with palm leaves. Of stone buildings there are very few. The fortress of Calicut is of much greater antiquity than the city to which it has given its name. The natives of Malabar believe that it was built by *Cheramperumàl* from whom all the petty Malabar princes are descended. This city was raised almost to the ground by Tippoo Sultan, who destroyed its flourishing trade; expelled from the country the merchants and factors of the foreign commercial houses; caused all the cocoanut and sandal trees to be cut down; and ordered the pepper plants in the whole surrounding district to be torn up by the roots, and even to be hacked to pieces, because these plants, as he said, brought riches to the Europeans and enabled them to carry on war against the Indians.—*Bartolomeo's Voyage to the East Indies.*

Europeans, the English and French have factories there, the former being the most influential. The Moors also are in great force, and form the majority of the inhabitants. They are not very favourable to the English, whom the fear of the Zamorin alone prevents them from attempting to expel from the city. Mr. Adams, the head of the English in these parts, never ventures into the streets unarmed, which is a plain proof of the fear he entertains of the inhabitants. The English, depending on the favour of the Zamorin, do not refrain from injuring the Mahometans in underhand ways. They will inform the bandits who lurk in the vicinity, some seven or eight leagues from the town, when the Moorish *Almades* (or small vessels used for trading along the coast) are about to depart with merchandize, so that they may take the opportunity to pillage them.

Calicut, though still a commercial town, is falling into decay. Many ships, both English, French and Moorish, however, keep up their trade with it, because there are no restrictions on commerce, with the exception of a duty of 5 per cent. paid to the Zamorin on all imports, to enforce which he keeps officers stationed here. As the English have the largest business they are the most favoured by the Zamorin, whom also they often supply with money when he is in want of it.

Mr. Adams, the head of the English in this place, was brought up there from a child, and having, from his youth, traded with the people of Malabar, he acquired a familiarity with their language which gained for him much influence among them. In consequence of this advantage, he was chosen by the English as their Governor. Being an enemy to our Company he incited the Zamorin to the late war, himself lending, in order to promote it, 100,000 rix dollars, with which that Prince defrayed the expenses of the war:—we have no reason to doubt this story, since he even sent English officers to assist the Zamorin, to defend Fort Paponette against our arms. Nay more, when Chetwa was conquered by the Zamorin, and our people expelled, the English immediately erected a factory there, in order to secure the pepper-trade; this factory was destroyed when the fort was re-taken. From all this, it is evident that the Dutch have but little good to expect from the English, and that they cannot prevent that people from playing their game slyly whenever it is in their power. The English cannot but look with envious eyes upon the great influence our Com-

pany possesses in India, and the confidence they inspire among the nations with whom they trade. It would be better if our neighbours would examine more closely into their own behaviour, and see whether their arrogance is not the cause of the mistrust and dislike with which they are regarded.

I will relate an instance of this sort of conduct which took place at Calicut in the year 1720. The English officer, second in command there, went out one day to drive in his carriage. It happened to be a day when the great national assembly of the Malabars was collected in the open air to deliberate on the affairs of the State. The Englishman, in order to shew his contempt for them, instead of making a circuit, drove right through the multitude, in spite of their entreaties that he should desist from such unbecoming conduct, which threw the whole assembly into the utmost confusion. On the following day, when the assembly met again at the same place, the Englishman chose to shew his courage by driving through it again with some ladies who were in his carriage. This time the people were so incensed at the repetition of the outrage, that they struck their hands to their weapons and cut the carriage to pieces, and the hero and his amazons had to escape wounded to their homes. Though this was no more than the miscreant deserved, yet Mr. Adams, declaring that the conduct of the natives was cruel and inhuman, left Calicut and threatened to set the bazaar on fire. The Zamorin, who reaped so much profit from the English trade, managed to pacify him and to recall him to Calicut, but as the bad feeling of the natives towards the English still exists, he distrusts them and spends most of his time at Tellicherry.

# LETTER IV.

Description of Quilon, Aiwike, Kully Quilon, Porcād, Cranganoor, Paliport, Chetwa—Dutch fortresses in Malabar—Narrative of the late war—Cananore, Anjengo, and Tellicherry belonging to the English—Eddawa, formerly a possession of the Danes, but not abandoned.

YOUR laborious but honorable office being connected with military affairs, it seems fitting, in writing to you, to blow the trumpet of war, and I shall therefore proceed to relate the history of the last which occurred in Malabar. I will give you also a description of the forts situated in that country, that you may conceive a clearer idea of the whole.

About 30 leagues south of the town of Cochin, is the Fortress of Quilon,* which was conquered by the Company from the Portuguese. It was formerly a town, but is now only a petty fort, and as the sea washes, and has even undermined, a portion of the walls, it has now been resolved to reduce it on that side, so that some of the inhabitants will be forced to break up their houses, and take up their abode outside the walls. This fort is of use in vesting the power of the Rajahs of Travancore and of Signati, in whose domains it is situated; and as an outpost against the foreigners, especially the English, whose fort at Anjengo is at no great distance. The Fortress of Quilon commands the bay of the same name: tolls are levied from the native traders, and licenses *(passen)* issued to them. It possesses little territory inland, besides the plain : on the sea side the boundary is marked by a gate with four stone pillars. There are certain stations in this province, such as Tengapatnam in the

* Collam, Coilon, Coulon or Quilon, signifies, in Malayalim, a tank. It was built, A. D. 825; and was at one time a place of considerable importance. The natives of the country begin their era from its foundation, in the same manner as the natives of Cochin begin theirs from the origin of the island of Vaipeen. In former days there were a great many weaving-looms, and manufactures of cotton and stoneware here. Alexius Menezes, the first Archbishop of Goa, built an excellent fortress here, which afterwards fell into ruins, being neglected by the Dutch.—H. D.

south near C. Comorin, which serve principally as places for the despatch of letters, and for cutting millstones and other stones used in the service of the East India Company. A good deal of linen also is woven here, though the trade belongs to Tutacorin. North of Quilon are some other factories, among which are the great and little Aiwike, situated at the mouths of rivers, where the Company stations corporals with some coloured soldiers to prevent the smuggling trade in pepper.

The factory of Kully Quilon is especially noteworthy, being the first which the East India Company possessed in Malabar. The Rajah of Kully Quilon was the first sovereign who admitted the Company into his territories, though he would not grant them permission to erect a fort. About 400,000 lbs. of pepper are annually purchased by the Company in this place.

Porcād is a second factory, situated nearer to Cochin. This also bears the name of the kingdom in which it is situated. A considerable quantity of rice is produced here owing to the fertility of the low lands. The Company obtain the same amount of pepper here as in Kully Quilon.

There are three forts belonging to the Company to the North of Cochin, where more danger is to be apprehended from hostile powers. Cranganoor is about 15 miles from Cochin in this direction, situated at a bend of the river of the same name. It was once, as the Portuguese travellers tell us, a considerable town, but is now merely a small, though strong, fortress, and it formerly served as a restraint upon the power of the Zamorin; but this object has ceased to exist since that prince has withdrawn from the neighbourhood, and the Company's territories have been extended, particularly during the late war. The fort serves now as an outpost against the Rajah of Cranganoor, a very feeble potentate, and yet more against the Rajah of Porcād, whose territories lie on the opposite side of the river. It is also of use as a preventive station against the smuggling trade, and the transit of prohibited goods; as well as in levying certain tolls for the East India Company. The station of Paliport is in the same province; it is situated at the mouth of the river Cranganoor, which falls into the sea three miles from the town of the same name, and takes its name from a *strong quay* which was formerly garrisoned, but is now abandoned, as there is no enemy to be feared in the neighbourhood; and the place is only tenanted by a corporal and a few black soldiers. Like other forts it is used as a preventive station.

Chetwa is another fort about 12 leagues from Cochin, serving partly to protect commerce, and partly as a defence against the Zamorin, whose dominions lie contiguous. It stands at the mouth of the river, and, is at the present moment, the strongest fortress in Malabar. Its erection 7 or 8 years ago cost us a severe war which lasted several years, and the history of which is worth relating.

The East India Company having resolved to build a new fort* gave orders to B. Ketel, the Commandant of Malabar, to finish it as speedily as possible. This alarmed the Zamorin, who knew it was intended to curb his power on this coast. He accordingly left no means untried to impede its progress; and not succeeding by fair methods, he determined to try force. The fort was now almost completed; and he saw that the time for his attempt was come. He was encouraged by learning that the garrison, consisting of 48 men, were lodged outside the half finished fortress, and that none of the requisites had been provided for its defence. This shewed the greatest want of foresight in the Commandant, who had received intelligence of the intended attack, and ought therefore to have increased his garrison, to have made convenient places for artillery, and ordered his men to keep within the walls, and be on the alert. The Zamorin perceiving his advantage, crossed the river at night with 600 men, who were soon followed by more : and all was effected so quietly, that about 4 o'clock in the morning of Jan. 22nd, 1715, they surprised the soldiers who were sleeping in their huts before the fort. They took to flight in great alarm, and the Zamorin obtained possession of the place without striking a blow. Near the fort was a *pagger*† of the East India Company built of palm trees, the interstices filled with earth and rubbish so as to make a

* The following account of this transaction is given by Captain Alexander Hamilton, who travelled among the East Indies between the years 1688 and 1723. "The Dutch were building the fort of Chetwa, and the Zamorin got "some of his men under the disguise of labourers to be employed by them, "and to take an opportunity of surprising the Dutch. The two lieutenants "who had the overseeing of the work were one evening diverting themselves "with a game at tables in a guard room about half a mile from the fort. "They had let some of their soldiers go straggling about, and the disguised "natives took the opportunity to kill the sentinels, signal to the ambuscade, "and take the half built fort. One of the lieutenants in attempting to retake "it was killed; the other, thinking it impracticable to attack greater forces "within than he had without, embarked for Cochin with his men. I was fortuned to be at Cochin when he and his men arrived, and by a Court Martial "he was sentenced to be shot, which sentence I saw executed. The Zamorin "caused the English flag to be hoisted, and the fort was destroyed."—TRANS.

† A *pagger* appears to be a small fortified village or hamlet.

breastwork to which the fugitives hastened announcing their misfortune. Ensign Stock, who was in command of the place, received the tidings with consternation, and having but a very weak garrison, while the enemy's force was continually increasing, he madė no attempt to expel them. For this neglect capital sentence was pronounced against him by the Council of Justice sitting at Ceylon, God knows with what right, and he was shot, only a few weeks after he had been elevated to the rank of lieutenant. When the tidings of this disaster reached Cochin, it caused a universal panic among the Dutch, and gave rise to a spirit of indolence among the natives, who thought that we were ruined. Commandant Ketel resolved to march out of the city with three companies, which formed the greater portion of the garrison, leaving orders that the artificers, sailors and scribes should man the walls. He advanced rapidly, taking with him three pieces of artillery, and two mortars, and hastened to Chetwa. Mangatatya, the Zamorin's general, stationed himself with his troops to obstruct his passage, but as soon as they felt the power of our cannons and musketry, they took to their heels; many were cut down, others drowned in the river, and others took refuge in the fort at Chetwa, where their defeat caused a great panic; and there is no doubt that if the Commandant had followed up his victory by attacking the fort, the enemy would then have abandoned it in alarm. But instead of this, he marched with his troops into our neighbouring pagger, and thus gave time to the enemy, who were totally unprovided, to supply themselves with necessaries by aid of the English at Calicut, and to barricade the entrances to the fort; proving themselves in this last measure wiser than our people, who had left the gateways unprovided with doors. At length on the 1st Feby. the Commandant resolved to assault the place, and scale the walls; but oh folly! when the troops reached the walls, they found that they had neglected to bring scaling ladders, and were consequently forced to retire foiled, with the loss of 80 men. The Zamorin took advantage of this opportunity, to build a fort called Paponetti, between Chetwa and Cranganoor, which he fortified with three trenches, and manned with a troop of soldiers, among whom were some Portuguese deserters, and even some English officers.

Towards the end of 1715, three Captains arrived from Batavia with a reinforcement; they attacked this building on the 11th January, 1716, but, owing partly to some misunder-

standing among the officers, and partly to the faint-heartedness of Captain Pluis, the second in command, who trembled at the sound of cannon, the attempt failed. For when the besieged beheld our men advancing, they were so terrified at their numbers that they rushed out of the fort on the opposite side; and those of our troops who were stationed there, mistaking the cause of the sally, and imagining it was an assault upon themselves, were seized with a sudden panic, and fled in disorder. The enemy, beholding this unexpected diversion, mustered courage and returned to the forsaken fortress; and there is no doubt that had they understood how to follow up their advantage, they might have completely routed our army, by cutting off their passage and obstructing their retreat, as there is no beaten road or path through the forest which surrounds the fort. This fruitless result of the expedition created universal consternation, which was increased by the rumours which began to fly about, mostly originating in an apprehension that the allied princes were about to desert us; the Rajah of Parve in particular, who, it was reported, was about to attack the fort of Cranganoor. Hearing this, the Commandant resolved to abandon our pagger at Chetwa, in order that the garrison might not be cut off, and to remove it in order to assist in strengthening Cranganoor.

Things remained in this state till the end of the year 1716, when William Bakker Jacobz was despatched from Batavia as Admiral and Commander-in-Chief. He had served in his youth as Lieutenant in the Navy, and had never been engaged in any other campaign. With him were associated Major Hans Frederic Berkman, who was experienced in the military affairs of Malabar, having passed many years here; and Commander Johannes Hertenberg, who was to supersede Ketel in the management of mercantile affairs. They brought with them a splendid army composed of Europeans, Javanese, Balinese and others, to whom were joined the troops of the Rajah of Cochin, so that they were well prepared to carry on a campaign. Their first attempt was upon the stronghold of Paponetti. When they reached the anchorage up the river called Caro, about a quarter of a league distant from the enemy's pagger, the General gave notice of his approach by discharging three pieces of artillery. This was answered by three shots from the enemy within the fort, who meant by this to shew that they were prepared to await the attack of the General and his army. The

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latter advanced as soon as it was morning, resolving to attack the pagger on three points at once; which was achieved with such good effect that before 10 o'clock the enemy displayed a flag of truce. Owing either to the state of intoxication into which most of the principal officers (except the Major) were plunged, or to some other cause, no regard was paid to this signal; and as our army had by this time made itself master of the two first trenches, the enemy perceiving that their flag of truce was disregarded, retreated within the third entrenchment, which was very strong, and now well supplied with men. Here they defended themselves with great courage, inflicting considerable loss upon our troops; and when at length they again hoisted the flag of truce, it met with more attention, and a treaty was concluded by which they agreed to evacuate the fort with arms in their hands. But an unfortunate accident occurred, caused, it was said, by the Europeans who were within the fort. The powder magazine was set on fire, that it might not fall into the hands of our army, whilst the Zamorin's troops were in the act of leaving the fort; many were burnt, and several others rushed so violently on our ladders in order to escape, that some of our soldiers were pushed off and fell to the ground, which infuriated them so that they struck at the heathen multitude with the butt ends of their fire-arms; and the more the poor wretches attempted to defend themselves the more violent they became, and they cut down such numbers, that according to one reckoning three thousand of the enemy were killed within and without the fort—others say one thousand. The fort was afterwards destroyed, and completely razed to the ground. The bones of the dead remained for many years in the surrounding fields, a memorial of this great defeat.

The heathens received a great shock by the result of this battle. In order to follow it up, some of our vessels were sent to attack Chetwa by sea. On arriving there, no enemy was to be found. At first it was supposed that they were in concealment, and we did not venture to approach too near, lest they should fall upon us; but at length on receiving certain intelligence that they had deserted the fort, our men entered and found not a soul there. Our General afterwards captured several Paggers, Mapowvane, Towtamburi, Avatorti, and Ourganoor in the land of the Paliat; and gained a decisive victory over the Zamorin's army near Ourganoor. The Balinese pikemen did him great service in this battle,

rushing furiously on the foe, and terrifying them so much that they dreaded them more than the Europeans, as men from whom no quarter was to be expected. If the General had chosen to advance his victorious banners, he could no doubt have made himself master of the Zamorin's Court at Ponany, and of Calicut itself; but whether private reasons of his own induced him not to do this, and therefore not to conclude peace that year (which he might have done on advantageous terms, and thus have spared the Company costly preparations for the ensuing campaign), or whether other considerations weighed with him, we will not now pause to enquire. Nothing was done in the rainy season, (which is not adapted for carrying on warlike operations): but at the close of the year, Patricotti was taken, and a noble pagoda of the Poenetoar Namboori was pillaged by the Balinese and other coloured soldiers, although the General, for reasons of his own, had issued a strict prohibition. The Javanese soldiers, attracted by the booty, broke this prohibition, and obtained a quantity of gold and silver articles and precious stones, which the Europeans, not daring to disobey, could not share. I have obtained many heathen idols from these spoils which I keep as relics. Shortly after this followed the peace concluded in 1717, so that the reinforcements sent from Batavia were not wanted.

In conclusion I shall add that thirty-six leagues to the north in the kingdom of Colastri is the fort of Cananore, which on one side is washed by the sea, and consequently could not be easily blockaded.* This fort serves as a bulwark not only against the power of the native monarch, but also against the Moors, who have a prince there called Ali Rajah. The latter has up to this time been a good friend of the Company,

* "Proceeding along the sea coast," says Bartolomeo, "you then arrive at Cananore, a town with a castle, and subject to the government of Queen Collatiri, by the Europeans called Collastri. This city is of great antiquity, and the kings of Collatiri belong to the first class of the Indian princes * * *

The capital of the kingdom of Cananore, called also Colanada, lies in the latitude of 11° 50′, and is distinguished by the same name. The whole surrounding district, which extends towards the north, as far as Mount Delly, is inhabited by the *Molandis*, who live merely by piracy. These sea-robbers are mentioned by Pliny, Arrian, Ptolemy, and other ancient authors. They unite themselves to other pirates, who reside on the Angedib islands, near Goa, and capture all the small vessels, which sail from Goa to Cochin. The huts in which their wives and children live, stand on the eastern side of Mount Delly. This mountain, which forms a cape or head-land, lies in the latitude of 12° 5′; and here Malabar or Malayala, properly so called, ends."—*Voyage to E. Indies.*

transacting business with them, and supplying them with cardamoms and turmeric.

From all this history, you can form a good idea of the power and means of the East India Company in Malabar. Other European nations have great possessions here. The English have a fort called Anjengo,* south of Quilon; it is tolerably strong, as it has need to be; for there are many enemies in the neighbourhood, and it has often been attacked. In the north they have a fort called Tellicherry, between Calicut and Cananore, which of late years they have considerably strengthened.

The poor Danes have also a residence in Malabar, called Eddawa, resembling a miserable hut, rather than the dwelling of a commercial officer. It is situated three leagues south of Quilon. This nation has fallen quite into obscurity in these parts, from its want of money and influence; so that the natives last year (1722) refused them lodging, there; upon which their Superintendent repaired to Quilon to dwell for a time under our protection, and in the sequel to Tranquebar a factory of theirs on the Coromandel Coast.

Here then you have a sketch of the European settlements in Malabar, together with an account of the late war. I hope you will not take it amiss that I have related all the circumstances without keeping back anything, and without sparing the managers of the war; for it seems to me that the whole truth of such things should be related without disguise, though this rule is but little regarded by historians of the present age.

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* Anjengo or Angintenga, a corruption of the two Tamil words unjee taynkul or five cocoa trees, was for many years an English factory and a place of some note in former days. It is now desolate and deserted. The ruins of the Portuguese Church and fort, still exist. Orme, the Historian, was born at Anjengo. For further accounts of this interesting spot see Forbes' Oriental Memoirs, and Abbé Raynal's History of the Indies.—H. D.

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# LETTER V.

Description of Canara, Vingorla, Goa—and the Customs of the Portuguese in these parts.

THE pleasure you have always taken in the study of history, and of its sister science geography, induces me to give you an account of some countries lying to the north of Malabar, and in some measure belonging to it: as it contains factories fortified in ancient times by the Company, which are under the management of its officer, who bears the title of Commandant of Malabar, Canara, and Vingorla.

Canara is a kingdom adjoining Malabar on the north, subject to an independent Prince, who is much more magnificent and powerful than those of Malabar; though the religion of the inhabitants of the two countries is nearly identical. The East India Company possess no jurisdiction whatever in this place, and are only tolerated there as merchants, driving a good business in spices, sugar, &c.

This kingdom produces many peculiar commodities, such as sandal wood, which is found there in great abundance, as well as rice. We might call it the granary of all Northern India; indeed the East India Company are often obliged to get rice from here for the consumption of Malabar and Ceylon. The Portuguese send a fleet annually to occupy the seaport of Canara, not only for the purpose of supplying themselves with rice for Goa and other parts of India, but in order also to prevent their enemies the Arabs from obtaining any provisions there.

The city of Canara, where the Rajah holds his Court, lies some leagues inland, and is connected with the seaport by a fine road, planted with trees, which the inhabitants are obliged to keep in excellent order. This road is so secure that any stranger might go and sleep there with bags full of money, and nobody would molest or rob him; for, if such a thing occurred, the people in the neighbourhood would be not only severely punished, but would be forced to make

good the money to the owner. Indeed the laws of the Hindoos to prevent robbery are admirable. At Surat itself, a city with so many thousand inhabitants, the merchandize lies out under open tents, as safe as if it were locked up in our storehouses.

Vingorla, lying some miles behind Goa, was fomerly also a factory of the East India Company, where a considerable trade was carried on, but they were lately forced to abandon it on account of the continued attacks of the Mogul Governor, and the Marasyn robbers under Mara Rogia, a rebel who devastates the empire of the Mogul with fire and sword. The Mahometans have indeed, since that time, proposed to restore this place to the Company, but the offer has been refused, the more so as the trade has been transferred to Surat.

While I am occupied with this part of the country, I must add some description of Goa,* as it lies between Canara and

* There is a legend that the old city of Goa was overwhelmed by a sudden rush of the sea, and that its houses may still be seen in calm weather below the waters. The following lines in allusion to this tradition may fitly be inserted in this place.

There was a city, glorious and free,
Built on the shore of the dark blue sea,
Where towers and spires of gilded hue,
Shone over the waves of the ocean blue,
And palace and cottage smiling told
How fair was that city in days of old!
Far, far above was the glowing sky
Where the sun shone bright o'er the turrets high,
While the cocoa shade and the graceful palm
Hung o'er the waters so lovely and calm,
Thick and numberless, side by side,
Drinking the stream of the onward tide.
But, now, from that spot where the glad sun shone,
That glorious city of palms is gone,
Gone with its pride and people so brave,
Whelmed by the tide of the salt sea wave.
Yes! there below the surging deep
Fair Goa's sunken towers sleep,
All, all that once was glad and bright,
Reposing there in ceaseless night!
Swift the remorseless billows roar
Rose wildly o'er that fated shore,
Nor human power availed to stem
The tide that rolled o'er the ocean's gem;
The wild surge broke—the rising foam
Dashed furious o'er each hall and home,
Sweeping the happy and the fair
'Neath the deep wave unburied there!
'Tis thus that olden annals tell
How Goa's beauteous city fell!
And, now, 'tis said, in midnight clear,
When the boatmen o'er those waters steer,



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Vingorla. It is considered by the Portuguese, as you know, the capital of the Indies, and here a viceroy sent from Portugal has his seat of government and holds his Court. It is sufficiently strong on the sea side and the moles are protected by forts and dykes : but it has nearly fallen into decay within, and is destitute of inhabitants, excepting the ecclesiastics, who have a convent here, the artizans, and the poor people. The upper classes have retreated to the environs of the town on account of the insalubrity of the climate : and the river banks and islets are adorned with flourishing farms and plantations of cocoa and other fruit trees, on the profits of which they subsist. The whole island of Goa is furnished with such like farms, as is also the case with Salsette in the north, where the Jesuits play the master, and other places.

It would be considered a disgrace by the Portuguese Fidalgos, to follow any trade, but the Jesuits look on such employments as honorable, and they are in fact the chief traders of these parts. We need be under no apprehension that the Portuguese will cause any injury to our

From sunset's tranquil hour until
The waves are hushed and winds are still,
Deep, deep below the water shining
They see the turrets still reclining
And the dim outline, lingering yet,
Of many a glittering minaret,
And groves and gardens, and the wall
That, still unharmed, surrounds them all
And silent streets, so drear and dread
O'er which no living beings tread—
A city wrapt by envious fate
In darkest gloom, most desolate!
Not the fair mistress of the world (1)
Was thus to pitiless ruin hurled,
Tho' famine's waste, and sword and fire,
Combined to make her life expire,
Tho' floods and tempests, and the tide
Of wild Barbarian crushed her pride,
And superstition's furious zeal
Hath rent her more than savage steel ;
Yet, still her palaces deny
The wrath of man, and time defy,
And many a ruin can yet unfold
Where warriors stood and spoke of old.
Nor has worse fate that (2) town befel,
Which felt the burning mountain's power
Which, flaming like an earthly hell,
Enwrapt it in its lava shower.
Ages swept by, none knew the spot,
Almost the thrilling tale forgot,

(1) Rome. (2) Pompeii.

commerce here, for they are devoid of any knowledge of business, and what with their indigence and their fraudulent conduct which has destroyed all confidence in them, they are held very low in public estimation throughout the Indies. But they are great lovers of fine titles. High offices and generals are all the talk among them. An office which with us would be filled by a small tradesman, must needs require a general with them. For each ship of war, they have a *Capitano di Marre Guerre*, and a levy of captains, lieutenants and ensigns besides. It would be a great mistake however to suppose that their pay is proportionate to their titles. A captain receives less than one of our serjeants, and the Resident of Panoor assured me that he had only twenty golden *funams* or shillings per month from the king, for his maintenance; yet these gentlemen like to cut a figure. Not satisfied with having one umbrella carried over his head, a man of high rank requires two or three, ornamented with hanging fringes and silver buttons. The bearers must be Kaffires, clothed in red coats, and these are

For, vineyards rose and blossomed where
Was once a town so stately and fair.
Yet now uncovered it stands alone,
As once it stood in the days that are gone,
And the bright sun shines on the marble floor
As it shone there a thousand years before.
And, still more famed for wealth and pride,
Where kings and prophets lived and died,
Was that great city (3) whose dread power
Survived not o'er its destined hour.
The " mighty city"—ere it fell
Where earth's proud princes loved to dwell,
And gorgeous monuments upreared
To those they honoured and they feared.
Yet seers foretold the threatened doom,
And, darker than the sculptured tomb,
All pomp and pride for ages lay
In heaps beneath the mouldering clay;
Yet though deserted in despair,
The ruined city still is there!
But thou, fair Goa! not again
Shall rise from out the boundless main.
In all thy beauty buried deep
Beneath the wave for ever sleep!
No falling rock, no lightning's blast,
Thy sea-girt towers to earth have cast,
Nor cruel foe with sword and flame,
Thy self-won power e'er overcame,
The waters swept thy pride away,
To lifeless doom, but not decay.

H. D.

(3) Babylon.

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accompanied by other Kaffres bearing long swords called *Espingardes*, who act as bravoes for their masters. For, as their incomes are so slender and their state so imposing, these signors often betake themselves to schemes of plunder and assassination; and every year they despatch an expedition against their hereditary enemies the Arabs, in the hope of obtaining booty, of which however in these days they do not gain much.

There is no place in the world where law is less regarded than here. Scarcely any enquiry is instituted into cases of murder, moreover the Fidalgos or noblemen cannot be punished for crime in the Indies, but must be sent to Portugal for trial; and this is rarely done. Their vice and dissipation are excessive; they surround themselves with troops of *Bayaderes* or dancing girls, row with them in their *Oranbaien* on the rivers, and spend their time with them in all sorts of amusements. These Bayaderes are, for Hindoos, very pretty. In their dances they move not their feet alone, but all their limbs. They attire themselves very gaily, with bracelets and golden ornaments, and exercise great fascination over the pleasure-loving Portuguese.

The Portuguese ladies are not better conducted than their husbands. When a man of any rank travels abroad, he does not leave his wife at home, but takes care to shut her up in a convent. Indeed the jealousy of the husbands goes so far that they remark if any man speaks to their wives, and not unfrequently death is the penalty he incurs.

The Viceroy here is the highest in command; he remains for three years only, unless the Portuguese sovereign should prolong the term. He has two residences, one in the city, called the *Casa di Pulvere*, and the other, where he commonly sojourns, outside the walls. He holds audience every morning; standing under a canopy; and takes his meals alone. His Court circle is considerable: and he makes a good sum out of the presents which the inhabitants, according to custom, must offer at his coming and going. In the interregnums between the departure of a viceroy and the arrival of his successor, the Archbishop or Primate takes the reins of Government, and then the Clergy have their turn in the appointment to offices.

The Ecclesiastics here are innumerable; Hindoos and natives of Canara as well as Europeans—so that there are much fewer soldiers than priests. The reason why so many natives enter the priesthood, is that they may be spared the

insults of the Portuguese, who treat all black men as if they were slaves.

The Portuguese trade in the Indies is of little value. It makes a great noise when two ships from the mother country arrive together in the year at Goa: and these come more for the purpose of providing the inhabitants with necessaries than for commercial enterprise. Each has on board more than forty Ecclesiastics of various orders. Tobacco is charged with heavy imposts, the produce of which is assigned especially to the Queen for her private purse. It is nevertheless an article of great consumption; being not only used by the Portuguese in all parts of India, but exported also to foreign nations in Europe, the Dutch taking no small share of it.

The most profitable trading voyage of the Portuguese is that to Mozambique. Here they sell linen and other commodities, and purchase in exchange many slaves or Kaffires, whom they convey to Goa, where they fetch a good price. They carry on commercial transactions with China likewise, where they possess an island called Macao. The Macao merchants have for some years kept up a brisk intercourse with Batavia, the Chinese junks having kept aloof. But not more than one or two ships visit Goa during the course of the year, and these part with most of their cargo, consisting principally of Chinese luxuries, as silks, tea, sweetmeats, and sugar, at Cochin and Ceylon. There is no nation in the world so fond of sweetmeats as the Portuguese. They always hand them about on their social visits. But, for wine, beer, and strong liquors in general they have no taste: intoxication is of rare occurrence among them. The Dutch on the contrary drink to such an extent as to expose themselves to the reproaches of the Portuguese and the Natives, who commonly call us *Hollandeses bebidos* or Dutch drunkards. The English are liable to the same imputation: they are greatly attracted by the Persian wines, and by Punch, which is made of the arrack of Goa. I must remark, by the way, that though in England they talk a great deal about the Protestant religion, the English in India allow themselves to be very much mixed up with members of the Romish communion, generally having their children baptized by the Priests, and marrying Roman Catholic wives.

Having thus far extended my account of the Europeans at Malabar and the neighbouring places, which I trust you will not find tedious,

I shall now conclude, &c.

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# LETTER VI.

Malabar an expensive settlement to the Dutch East India Company—Its importance—Remarks on the duties incumbent on our Commandants—Encomiums on Joh: Hertenberg—Administration of the East India Company—Landed estates belonging to them.

As the welfare of our State and the prosperity of commerce have always concerned you deeply, I have no doubt that you will peruse with pleasure the account of the Company's trade in Malabar, and the importance it has attained on this coast: the methods of maintaining it, and its vast wealth, which influence in a peculiar manner the welfare of our country.*

Malabar is considered by the East India Company as an expensive settlement, for the profits obtained on the goods which are here sold are far from defraying the expenses required for its support. You will easily understand this, when

* In 1602 the Dutch East India Company was formed by the amalgamation of several different companies into one united body. The members were invested with authority to conclude peace or make war with Oriental potentates, to build forts and garrison them according to discretion. For many years this new Company acquired considerable authority and power in the East. Its commercial relations were very extensive, and for its better protection the Company despatched a fleet of fourteen vessels, as a support to their numerous colonies. It was not long before they came in contact with their jealous rivals the Portuguese, and the hostile flects of both nations frequently encountered each other in the Indian seas. It was not till after many conflicts that the superiority of the Dutch was maintained. In less than half a century they had taken or destroyed upwards of 300 Portuguese vessels, and thus made themselves masters of the sea. Upon the destruction of the maritime power of the Portuguese, the Dutch found no difficulty in attacking and capturing their settlements on land, and the booty of military stores and ammunition which they seized in their several conquests, turned greatly to their advantage, as the magazines and fortresses contained every thing necessary both for themselves and the prosecution of their commercial projects. Such was the origin of the great prosperity of the Dutch East India Company. Last, after the lapse of a hundred and fifty years, the Company began to decline owing to many concurring circumstances, chiefly from the speculation and avarice of the Government and merchants, and partially from the innumerable wars in which they became engaged. Settlement after settlement becoming a prey to internal faction, or the attack of the natives, fell from their grasp, and the English soon supplanted a power which was unable to maintain itself either by land or sea.—H. D.

you learn that a ship of 145 feet is sufficient to provide the settlement not only with merchandize, consisting chiefly of arrack, sugar, spices, tin, copper, &c., but also with all the provisions requisite for a year. But, on the other hand, the maintenance of the garrison, its munition, and its servants, who may be reckoned at present at 1,200 souls, costs a large sum of money; and if to this we add the extraordinary expenses which have been incurred by the Company for some years past, by the erection of a new dispensary, rice-warehouse, hospital and powder magazine, a new fort at Chetwa, and a smith's shop, which are now almost completed—and also the expenses they have still before them in the establishment of a new factory at Porcad, and the occupation of the two forts of Cananore and Quilon—it is evident that their outlay must far exceed their profits here, without mentioning their expensive wars, the last of which cost nearly two millions.

You must not, however, conclude from this statement that this settlement is a useless position to the Company, and that it were better to abandon it; for there are weighty reasons for its retention. The first is that we may remain masters of the pepper trade in Malabar, for it is certain that if the Company were to quit this place, the Portuguese would endeavour to obtain possession of it. They already affect to have claims upon it, and say arrogantly enough that "the Company are keeping it for their king." Still more would the English strive to get hold of it; for they have no commercial station in all Malabar that can at all be compared with this, for abundance both of pepper and of other goods.

In the second place, Cochin is very useful as a provisioning station for vessels sailing from Batavia to Mocha, or returning from Surat and Persia to Batavia. They can obtain here not only very good water (fetched from the river Mangatti), but also abundance of victuals at a cheap rate, such as poultry, pigs, cattle, fish and fruit. For this reason European vessels visiting the Indian coasts always put in at Cochin for provisions.

In the last place, we may add that Cochin serves as an outpost to protect Ceylon against the attempts of other European nations, especially the English, whom we have most cause to fear; for if they were masters of this place, they might use it as a rendezvous for their fleets. This they could do even in the rainy season; for light vessels of less than twelve feet might be brought over the sand bank into

the river, while the larger ones might lie securely in the Muddy Bay, three leagues distant.

Thus, you see the importance of this settlement, which requires a man of ability to manage it with discretion; for though, like the Company's other settlements it is governed by the Political Council, the chief responsibility rests with the head of that assembly, who is the Commandant; and it behoves him to be very ready witted when he converses with the native Rajahs, who are most difficult to deal with. For, if he hesitates, they deem it a sign of fear and confusion, and immediately assume a contempt for him. The Commandant must cultivate, also, a figurative and metaphorical mode of expression, which, besides being considered a proof of wisdom, enables him to throw a cloak over subjects which are disagreeable to them, and to carry out measures which they would not take so easily if they were expressed in plain words.

Having made close observations on all the commercial affairs of Malabar, my belief is that the following rules should be observed in order to a successful management of this country :—

I. The Commandant must effectually defend the kingdom of Cochin against the future attacks of its enemies, to which end the Company have declared themselves the Protector of that kingdom. If this were not done, the Zamorin would soon weaken the power of the Rajah of Cochin, and would allow other nations to establish themselves in the territories he might gain. It is therefore clearly for the Rajah's interest to keep on good terms with the East India Company.

II. The Commandant must especially endeavour to prevent the Rajah of Cochin from making aggressions on the Zamorin or others, or provoking them to war; which he would be very ready to do, relying on the Company's arms, and hoping by their assistance to regain some lands to which he lays claim.

III. He must enquire narrowly into the justice of the claims the Rajahs make mutually on each other, as he is often called on to arbitrate between them. This is the more necessary as their claims are very obscure and are seldom settled, so that they have continual pretexts for the wars which perpetually arise between them. A wise Commandant will take care not to involve himself in these disputes, unless they immediately affect the interests of the Company.

IV. He must be thoroughly acquainted with the laws and customs of the natives, who cling very much to them, making them a part of their religion. They carry these feelings to such an extent that if a Commandant were unwittingly to infringe their laws in passing sentence, it would arouse a general spirit of murmuring and dissatisfaction.

V. He must undertake no wars without great deliberation, and with a good prospect of success, as the Company might otherwise be placed in great danger; the character of the natives disposing them to grow insolent and daring at the slightest misfortune that happens to us, and in such cases their numbers swell like a snowball. An instance of this occurred in 1715-16, when we lost the fort of Chetwa, on which occasion the natives broke out into all manner of extravagance, using most insolent language; their spirit was quelled, however, in the following year by our arms.

The Commandant Johannes Hertenberg has extorted from the Rajah of Cochin two stipulations which are very conducive to the welfare and tranquillity of the Company. The first is that all the Rajahs, Princes and Nobles of the kingdom shall lay their complaints and disputes before him, so that he is constituted arbitrator between them; by which means he becomes acquainted with the grounds of their differences, and is thus enabled to hinder many illegal enterprises of the Rajah of Cochin, which occasioned great annoyances to the former Commandants. The second stipulation is that the Rajah shall undertake no hostilities against the Zamorin or any other Prince without the previous knowledge and consent of the Commandant; without which agreement he could frequently plunge us into war merely to advance his own interests.

As we are engaged on the subject of the administration, it will be as well to describe how this settlement is managed. The East India Company having received by patent, from the States General, supreme jurisdiction in their own settlements, this power is vested in the chief place of each great settlement, of which Malabar is one. All the native Christians dwelling in the lowlands are under the authority of the Company, and neither the Rajah of Cochin nor any of his princes have the power of putting them to death or punishing them; if they did so, satisfaction would be demanded. The Jewish, Moorish, and Canarese inhabitants are partly under the authority of the Rajah, and partly under that of the Company.

Crimes are punished here, as they are in Europe, by fines, imprisonment, flogging, branding, hanging and shooting. Criminals are sometimes sent in chains to labour on the public works, as there are no jails here. The assemblies, as in the other Indian settlements, are either political, where the Company's affairs are discussed; judicial, where criminals are tried and judgment passed in important causes; and civil, where disputes of less amount than 100 rix dollars between the native townspeople are decided, and before which the ceremony of betrothal takes place. There are also an Orphan chamber, whose business it is to take care of the property of orphans, and the College of Aldermen, who have the superintendence of the streets, houses and canals.

In the last place, it will be as well to notice here the various landed properties which the Company possess in this place, and the rents they receive. They consist of estates and islands which the Company have acquired from time to time either by gift or by treaty. I must premise that the islands are situated not in the sea but in the rivers, or else are detached pieces of land washed over by the sea and rivers. They are let on leases of ten or fifteen years, in order by this length of possession to encourage the tenants to make new plantations, hoping in the interval to receive the fruits of them; and the rents consequently rise at each new lease. Indeed it is made a condition of the lease that the tenant shall make plantations of cocoa-nut palms; and a person is appointed to number the trees in all the estates every year, in order to ascertain how much the plantations have increased. The islands contain not only cocoa palms, but also arable fields and salt-pans, for this country produces an abundance of salt, which is exported to other places. The following is a list of these arable lands and fields, with the years in which they were acquired.

| | Acquired. |
|---|---|
| The lands of Edourtien Paponetti ..............A. D. | 1166 |
| Muskieten island, gardens, and arable field ... | 1708 |
| Gardens in the island of Caddemata............ | 1689 |
| ——— at Arkotte................................. | 1712 |
| Saltpans in the island of Bollogatti............ | 1670 |
| Arable fields and gardens in the island of St. Domingo.......................................... | 1718 |
| ——————— in the island of Poul or Hosser's Island................................ | 4665 |
| ——————— in the island Ilha Perdido ... | 1664 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Arable fields in Cruz de Milagre........ ........ | 1620 |
| ———— in the island of Guassini......... | 1692 |
| ———— at Antje Caimal.................... | 1692 |
| ———— at Castelle.......................... | 1663 |
| ———— in the island of Bindverti......... | 1663 |
| ———— at Aroe.............................. | 1683 |
| Gardens and lands behind the Company's garden.................... .................... | 1663 |
| Arable fields at Senhora Sande.................. | 1687 |
| ———— at St. Iago.......................... | 1687 |
| ———— at St. Lovys.......................... | 1667 |
| ———— Beljoor de Fonseka................. | 1667 |
| ———— at Mondanbelli..................... | 1681 |
| ———— Perperangerre....................... | 1690 |
| ———— Maincorde or Muddy Bay......... | 1668 |
| ———— St. Andre.............................. | 1665 |
| ———— Chermagellam. ...................... | 1667 |
| The lands of Rajah Marta, called Banbasse ... | 1673 |
| Calicatte or Marenbal................. ........... | 1669 |
| Kully Quilon's strand.............. .............. | 1717 |

The East India Company has also bestowed on the Deaconry some gardens and lands in the island of Vypeen, behind the Canarese bazaar, in order that the revenues thence derived should be devoted to the use of the poor.

# LETTER VII.

Trade of the English in Malabar, and the disasters they have experienced.

You are doubtless aware that the trade of the East India Company, so famous throughout the world, one of the main stays of our country, and the resource of thousands of poor creatures who make their livelihood by the employment it affords them, has been greatly undermined by the English; not so much by the English Company and their vessels, as by the private traders, who are much more numerous, and who besiege the Coasts of Bengal, Coromandel, Malabar and Surat. At Cochin we see at least thirty English vessels, large and small, in the course of the year, which perform the transit between the neighbouring regions, and put in here chiefly for the sake of provisions. Three or four of the English Company's ships have also been here lately. It is certain that their trade in these places is less considerable than that of the Dutch Company, who despatch three or four vessels annually to Surat, on account of the spices which are brought there in large quantities, and of which they monopolize the trade.

The character of the English is, as you are aware, proud domineering, and selfish, and, when combined with a disposition to cruelty, has been the cause of many sad events in India. For, as they always oppress the natives, the English gain from them little in return but hatred and curses, and the feeling thus engendered often results in deeds of violence and murder. There was an instance of this some years ago at Bencoolen on the coast of Sumatra, where the natives were so much irritated by the outrages committed upon them, that they at length resolved to destroy the English fort, a purpose which they accomplished with the slaughter of every one they could lay hands on.

Not long afterwards a similar occurrence took place at Anjengo, a fort belonging to the English in the country of

Travancore, about sixteen miles from Quilon. It is said to have originated in some misconduct of the English on Shrove Tuesday, in the year 1720. Their interpreter, who was a native Christian, and consequently a Roman Catholic, was preparing for the approaching fast, as the members of his church are wont to do, by an ebullition of unusual license, and among other things he slily instigated some lads to pelt, with eggs and filth, the Moors, always a peculiarly sensitive race, together with some heathens who happened to be passing by. The Moors, whose habit it is to go about armed, instantly clapped their hands on their weapons and threatened not to leave this insult unavenged. The interpreter upon this, quieted the tumult, and secretly informed the Commandant of what had taken place : and that officer, instead of punishing the oppressors, caused the Moors to be apprehended and imprisoned ; while the English remained perfectly indifferent to the exasperation which this transaction excited among the rest of the Moors around them.

But another crime ensued, attended by more serious consequences, arousing the anger of the whole nation. The English seized a heathen medicine master, called a *Pandyt*, who is always a Brahmin, and compelled him to shave the beards of their slaves, which is an act that Brahmins cannot perform without losing caste. This insult to an order of men so highly honoured, was deeply felt, and vengeance was resolved upon.

Accordingly the natives proceeded to blockade the English fort all round on the land side, preventing the ingress of supplies in this direction. They could not however prevent communication by sea, and as long as the fine weather lasted, the English obtained their supplies by that means. But from June till October the rainy season prevailed, and navigation was rendered impossible by the violence of the winds, and then, accordingly, they suffered from great scarcity of provisions. At length after the sea was again open, and some English vessels had made their way to the fort, in February 1721, a peace was nominally concluded with the natives, who however reserved a secret intention of wreaking dire vengeance on their foes as soon as a fitting opportunity should occur. An occasion for the execution of their design presented itself that same year, at the beginning of the rainy season.

With the view of conciliating the Queen of Attingal, mother of the royal race, whose authority was great in that

country, the English Commandant determined to offer her some splendid presents; and to make them the more acceptable he brought them in person, accompanied by a numerous retinue, leaving within the fort none but the sick and infirm. His escort consisted altogether of 140 persons. Troubled by no misgivings, they advanced with much pomp, with sound of trumpet and drums, to the Court of the Queen, who gave them a most friendly reception, and appeared to derive extreme gratification from their arrival and the gifts they brought, though for certain reasons she said she must defer receiving the latter until the following day. Meanwhile she pressed them to pass the night at her court, and the Commandant, utterly unsuspicious of danger, assented. Pretending that she was unable to accommodate the whole party in one place, the artful Princess assigned different lodgings for them, so that they should be too much scattered to assist each other in case of need. Then, in the course of the night, the inhabitants fell upon their unfortunate guests and massacred them, and this so thoroughly, that not a single European escaped, though, being armed, they made an energetic resistance. Some coolies managed to get away, and brought the dreadful intelligence to the fort.

Great was the consternation there. The women, whose husbands were slain, in grief and terror got into a sloop, which chanced to be at the spot, and fled to Coromandel. Those who remained in the fort, weak and unarmed as they were, expected certain death. The next day came however, and no foe was seen approaching; so their courage began to revive: they shut the gates, took some native christians into their ranks, and as well as they could, put themselves into a state of defence; and when shortly afterwards the hostile natives did indeed come to the attack, they were repulsed without difficulty, being altogether without knowledge of the art of siege. Thus it appears that both parties made a mistake: the Commandant in leaving the fort without a garrison, and the natives in not immediately attacking, when they could have captured it without a blow.

Since this time, no hostilities of any consequence have been exchanged; but the ill feeling still smoulders on, and there is a consciousness of mutual distrust. It was generally expected that the English would have taken dire revenge for the massacre last described; but the event has proved otherwise: nothing has been attempted by their ships of war that have lately arrived, though nothing could have been easier

than to lay waste the country or inflict punishment of some sort.

The ships in question—consisting of three English men of war, and three frigates, fitted out something like galleys with oars—were sent by the sovereign to sweep the sea of pirates and of illicit traders, but up to this time they have performed little worthy of note. When the fleet arrived at Madagascar with the intent of extirpating the European robbers, who have a stronghold there and have been extremely mischievous in the Indies, all its efforts were frustrated in consequence of the favour shewn to the outlaws by the natives of the island. Nor has the expedition been more successful in other parts, as, for instance, against the pirates of Angria, who constantly capture English vessels. These pirates occupy the shores of Sevajee, a revolted subject of the Mogul in the regions near Surat, and they maintain themselves by robbery, which, owing to the barrenness of the land, is their only means of support. They possess three forts, and a good many vessels furnished with oars, which hold several men and pedereros. They endeavour to surprise and board other vessels, and generally choose the night for their time of attack. The English and Portuguese having been the greatest sufferers from their depredations, formed a close alliance against them, and the Portuguese even granted the English, in the year 1721, a factory surmounted by their own flag, within the city of Goa. The two fleets then set out, commanded respectively by the Portuguese Viceroy and the English Commandant, with the intention of routing out this pirate's nest: but the scheme soon vanished in smoke, for while, on the one hand, Sevajee came forward to render his assistance to the marauders of Angria, on the other hand, the Portuguese entered into a secret compact with them, for a sum of money, and just as the fight was about to begin, treacherously deserted the English, who accordingly were compelled to re-embark as quickly as possible, not without the loss of some men.

Since then, these ships have done nothing except to levy contributions on English privateers under pretext of conveying them, and to such an extent, that they are more dreaded than even the pirates themselves. They have committed all kinds of malpractices in our roadsteads, forbidding all privateers to seek shelter there under the Company's flag. Captain Brandwit of the Salisbury even went so far as to attack two foreign vessels, the one carrying the English, and the other the Portuguese flag. One managed to escape by means of a

stratagem: but the other was compelled to pay money, like the English privateers, in order to satisfy the rapacity of the Captain, who had thus shamefully perverted the orders of his master.

Here I conclude my account of English affairs, &c.

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# LETTER VIII.

Divisions among the royal houses, and wars thence arising. Character and manners of Rajah Wierlam. Customs at the decease of the Rajahs. Observations on the conduct which ought to be observed by the Dutch Government in its intercourse with these princes.

NOT only is the whole of Malabar occupied by a multiplicity of kings and potentates, a circumstance causing in itself endless dissension, but these again are broadly ranged into two parties, whose hatred is the more effectual, and probably the more interminable seeing that it arises from the unfair distinctions introduced by the original laws of this kingdom.

The adherents of the two parties are called the Pandelakoers and the Chodderakoers: and just as Italy was formerly torn by the two rival factions of the Guelp and Ghibelliner, and England distracted by the wars of the white and red roses, and the Netherlands had to shed tears of blood owing to the ravages of the Kaabeljancos* and Flocks so has the trumpet of war blown by the Pandelakoers and Chodderakoers often summoned the princes of Malabar to mutual hostilities. Regarding the origin of these two parties, I find two different accounts, which are not unworthy of record. Some will have it that the great Cheramperoumal who partitioned Malabar and made laws for it which are still observed, instituted them for two important reasons, the first of which was to confirm the distribution of kingdoms that he had made; for, being about to undertake a journey, either to the Ganges

* *Kaabeljancos* and Flocks, two parties which in the 14th and 15th centuries divided and agitated the whole population of Holland and Zealand. The origin of this burlesque denomination was a dispute between two parties at a feast, as to whether the codfish took the hook, or the hook the codfish? This was made the pretext for a serious quarrel, and the partisans of the towns and of the nobles ranged themselves on either side, the former, the flocks, wore red caps and the latter, the Kaabeljancos, grey ones. Jacqueline of Holland was supported by the former in her quarrel with Philip of Burgundy, and in the year 1492 the extinction of that faction struck a final blow to the dissension. See History of Netherlands by T. Colley Grattan.—(TRANS.)

in fulfilment of a vow, or, as the Moors say, to visit Mahomet in Arabia for the purpose of embracing his religion, he divided among his favourites the whole of Malabar. Now, he assigned the kingdom of the Zamorin to his illegitimate children, who according to the law could not inherit: and it was natural to suppose that this would cause umbrage to his nephews who were the lawful heirs of the crown, and to whom he had only given the kingdom of Cochin. They would probably use every endeavour to recover their rights when opportunity offered. For this reason he originated these two parties, and he regulated the number of princes, noblemen, &c., who should belong to each, with the express command that if a king, prince or landowner should be attacked by one of the opposite faction, he should be assisted by all the members of his own party, under pain of loss of privileges. The Zamorin king was appointed chief of the Pandelakoer, and received a sword in token of his authority: and the king of Cochin as chief of the Chodderakoers received a shield. Cheramperoumal's second reason for establishing these factions was to create a martial spirit: lest, living in perpetual peace, the Malabar people should sink into effeminacy and thus become a prey to the surrounding nations.

There are a kind of sham combats still held in many kingdoms of Malabar, which probably owe their origin to this institution. In these jousts or combats, many hundred, perhaps a thousand, persons attack each other, armed with sword and shield, and inflict mutual wounds, sometimes indeed death, as happened at Kully Quilon when I was there last October.

From this account of the rival factions you perceive that the Zamorin is no emperor of Malabar, as the Portuguese used to tell us in their books, for he is no greater than three other chief princes of Colastri, Cochin and Travancore, and inferior in dignity, indeed, to the rajah of Cochin as being of inferior race. Nevertheless, the opinion has always held ground that he is the most powerful and possesses the best army of them all.

But to return from this digression. I said before that there are *two* traditions regarding these parties. The other tradition is that there were formerly two families, possessors of two pagodas. The name of the one was *Pandel*, that of the other *Choddar;* and the former being the strongest and most powerful, attacked the latter and plundered them, un-

til the Choddars implored help from the prince of Walwonatti in order to revenge themselves on the Pandels. These now being unable to withstand their enemies alone, conspired with the Zamorin against them : and thus drove them to apply in their turn to the king of Cochin, who consequently became the head of the Choddar party, while the Zamorin assumed the character of protector of that of the Pandels. Each of these monarchs enticed others to espouse their causes, and the dissensions thus originating have descended to posterity.

Most serious consequences have arisen from these divisions. In the first place, it was inculcated by law upon the principal States (Stenden) of each of these kingdoms that they must always espouse the faction of the supreme Rajah : Cochin has four of these States, which are called the pillars of the kingdom. They are Porcad and Paroe, the rajahs of which belong to the spiritual order, and Berkenkoer and Mangatti, having temporal rajahs. Though there are other princes in the kingdom of Cochin even more powerful than some of these Stenden, yet these are bound as Chodderakoers to assist the Cochin monarch in his wars against the Zamorin, and in return have a voice in the election of a new prince to the succession of the Cochin throne.

Secondly, to this division may be attributed the continual warfare which exists between the kingdoms of the Zamorin and Cochin. No firm or lasting peace is ever made, but merely, so to speak, a cessation of hostilities, invariably followed by a renewal of war. The irreconcileable hatred arising from the violence of these party feelings, was rendered more inveterate by the murderous deed of a Zamorin prince of bygone times, who caused three Cochin Princes to be killed. Animosity was exasperated by this to such an extent that even to this day members of the rival factions will never meet voluntarily or speak to each other. A reconciliation will never be effected until the law of retaliation be satisfied, which, according to their customs, demands the death of an equal number of princes of the murderer's family.

You have read in the Portuguese narratives of their voyages published by Vander Aa., (accounts no doubt containing many fictions and exaggerations, after the wont of these masters of the sea as they style themselves) how when rejected by the Zamorin they were received with open arms by the Rajah of Cochin : and now you can understand his motive for the kind reception he gave them ; he hoped with

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their assistance to accomplish his revenge upon his enemy, which he had not sufficient strength to do unaided, and he immediately plunged into hostilities.

The East India Company who established themselves as protectors of the kingdom of Cochin, were consequently also involved in these interminable wars.

It is the duty of a wise and prudent Commandant to take care that the Rajah of Cochin is not the aggressor, which, influenced by the noted hatred he bears his enemy, he is always ready to be, in the hopes of being able, assisted by the Company's arms, to acquire from the Zamorin certain territories to which he lays claim. Had this rule always been observed, the Company might have been spared many of the expensive wars they have been engaged in, and of which they had sad experience during the reign of the late Rajah.

This Rajah was a man of average height, dark and ugly, for which reason he was commonly called by the towns people, the charcoal burner ; he was crafty and designing, and was in the habit of clandestinely injuring other princes in order to provoke them to hostilities against each other.

He delighted in wars, though with his own soldiers he did but little execution, and laid the chief burden of prosecuting it upon the Company. His private interests occupied all his thoughts; he paid his soldiers so badly that they were sometimes forced when garrisoning a place to make a sortie to provide themselves with food. This was the case at Eunemakke. His extortions were unrivalled : he was always devising fresh means of levying funds, so that from being one of the poorest he became the richest of the Cochin rajahs. Confiding in no one, he would shut up his money in the pagoda, or bury it under ground, or carry it about with him in boxes. He condescended to traffic in the commonest commodities ; thus, he sold to his court rice and cocoa-nut shells both burnt and raw ; and by keeping the monopoly of these things in his own hands he enhanced the price of them. He lived on bad terms with Commandant Hertenberg, who did not relish his rogueries and refused to co-operate in his artful and underhand practices. He died after a long and painful illness. It is said that on his death-bed he enjoined upon his successor to live on good terms with the Company, though he had neglected to do so himself latterly. Death carried him off on the 9th October of last year (1732) ; he had reigned 20 years, and had nearly attained the 70th year of his age. He was little known by his own name, Wierlam,

among his subjects ; for their custom is never to call the Rajahs by their names but by their titles, as the Rajah of Cochin, Cranganoor and so forth. The individuals in the line of succession are not named after the properties of which they are sometimes the owners, but according to the order in which they stand with respect to the succession ; as the first prince (that is the rajah) the second, third, fourth, &c. The private territorial lords (landsheren) or grandees are called after their estates, dignities, or offices, as Kaimal, Ragiadoor, &c. The Rajah does not put his name as a signature to his letters (which are called Olas) but a mark, each kingdom having its own peculiar mark which never varies ; so that on merely seeing these letters one can tell at once from what kingdom or monarch they come, though the rajah's name does not appear.

The successor to the late rajah was, up to the time of his accession to the throne, the second prince, and thus by his elevation all the others below him attained a step in the order of succession ; and to keep the number full, a new prince, chosen from the legitimate royal family was incorporated among them. From this constitution it is apparent that a prince seldom attains the throne in his youth, unless in case of some extraordinary mortality. All who are above him, sometimes seven or eight, must precede him, before he can hope to enjoy the crown.

These princes either live on their own estates or on incomes allowed them by the Rajah. As these are but small, they often live in a very impoverished condition, and are for state reasons excluded generally by the Rajahs from the administration of affairs. The present Rajah is a man of little or no judgment, and was despised by his predecessor. His whole bearing and conduct betoken his inferiority ; he is rude and unpolished, extravagant in his conversation, irresolute in counsel, and violent in behaviour : not only do his courtiers and grandees esteem him but lightly, the Company too have little hope of getting any good out of him ; and perhaps they have as little reason to fear mischief, as he has not sense enough to injure them in any underhand manner. Yet they had better keep on good terms with him, in order to detach him from uniting against them with those who bear them no good will, of whom the most to be dreaded is the Paliat with his family. He is the General in Chief of the kingdom at this time. Hitherto this dignity has belonged to another family. His vast estates, and his excellent army combine to

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make him a dangerous neighbour, even to his sovereign, in the island of Vypeen, where he resides and a great portion of which belongs to him. His enterprising spirit was manifested four years ago, when he had the effrontery to slay a wealthy and influential Canarese called Malpa, one of the Company's merchants, and to boast of the deed: and, as the Company, probably fearing more serious consequences, let the crime go unpunished, his arrogance increases. Time will shew how far his turbulent spirit will carry him; at present, he is occupied with endeavours to foment angry feelings against the Rajah and the Company.

I must return to the accounts of the Rajahs, and the customs observed at their deaths and accessions. On his deathbed a Rajah presents 200 or 300 cows to the Brahmins, and other gifts: he also distributes among his relations, money, jewels, &c. for all that he dies possessed of devolves on his successor. At his decease, the grandees assemble and prepare all the necessaries for the burning of his remains, which ceremony must take place within 36 hours, and is performed, as is the custom among the Brahmins, with but little pomp. Money and other alms are distributed in the interval; and the Olas are made out, which are circulated to notify the Rajah's decease. It is not a matter of indifference to the Rajahs at what place they expire: when they find themselves dangerously ill they retire to certain spots which are especially sanctified for the purpose. These are Trichore (where the late Rajah died) Kankanoer and Tripontorah. The first twelve days are the days of great mourning, when all the subjects manifest their grief by tearing their hair and letting their beards grow; no business may be transacted, not even buying and selling provisions, throughout the country. For the first three days the successor is bound to furnish food for all the Brahmins present, and to give them money: this is repeated on the 40th day, and again at the expiration of three months. He wears mourning for a whole year, and during that period must submit to certain restrictions, such as not being allowed to shave his beard, chew betel, eat more than once a day, sleep on anything but a mat, &c. Neither may he enter any of the Company's factories or forts, or any other unholy place where cows are killed or eaten, so that the Commandant is obliged to wait upon him, at his Court or elsewhere if he wish to see him. After the first twelve days are ended, his principal subjects must pay their court to him occasion-

ally and offer him presents. First comes the head of the fishermen, who, after making his obeisance, lays before him a golden fish, a silver net, and an earthen dish containing sand and salt. On the anniversary of his predecessor's death, the Rajah gives a great feast to his court, for which preparations are made on a grand scale. I have been assured that sometimes as many as 14,000 or 15,000 of the venerated caste flock to these banquets, and these must be all regaled for three days with rice, butter, sugar, milk, piesang, &c., which, not being much used to such good cheer, they devour with voracity, and, besides furnishing all this, the host is bound to give all his guests money according to their rank, so that the amount of money spent at these ceremonies, is enough to maintain them for years if they are not rich. Similar feasts, but attended with less pomp, are given in memory of the Queen mother and the Princes of the kingdom.

The people of high caste also celebrate the memory of their deceased parents, wives, &c. They give a banquet on the first anniversary, and in the following anniversaries they double each time the triple cord they wear as the badge of their rank ; so that they who, in the beginning of the year, wear one triple cord, in the sequel wear three or four of them ;—which mode of wearing the cords is peculiar to the Brahmins, Chettis and Vaysias.

On the birth of a royal child in the line of succession, he is laid on earth brought from Wanneve, near Baliancotte, whence the royal family sprang, in the regal house of Chetria Gouron.

The Chettriahs in ancient times came here from the country of Hindostan in the North. There they might have lawful wives, but here they are not permitted to have them.

I must add a few remarks on the finances of the Rajah of Cochin. Some time ago the authorities in Batavia thought good to give him a grant of the Alfandigos, pepper customs, and 500 kandies of pepper, together with other privileges. Their object was so to enrich him, as to enable him to make head against the Zamorin. This policy seems to me nugatory, because in the first place their avaricious dispositions induces these Rajahs to appropriate all that they can get to their private use ; we saw a specimen of this in the late Rajah, who from the poorest became one of the wealthiest of his race, whilst no one ever paid his troops so poorly, and his army was consequently in a wretched condition ; and as his wealth increased his spite and enmity towards the Company

augmented. In the second place, a Rajah is generally poor on his accession to the throne, though he is heir to all the property and wealth that his predecessor died possessed of, for they generally distribute before their death all the wealth they have amassed together, consisting principally of jewels and money, among their nearest relatives (excluding the next heir.) Thus the late sovereign made his nephew the third prince his heir in these things, so that he can afford to laugh at the new king who is poor : and so the kingdom is no gainer by the wealth of the king.

Add to this, thirdly, the dread of the Zamorin's arms which has taken deep root in the hearts of the remaining princes. I believe it would have been better had the East India Company from the beginning reserved for themselves all that they have conquered from the Zamorin, and therewith made a fund to defray the expenses of the succeeding wars.

# LETTER IX.

Account of the royal houses of Malabar, Travancore, Cochin, the Zamorin, and Colastri—Disagreements existing between them.

In a previous letter, I have explained the laws of succession which obtain in Malabar, from which you have gathered that the supreme authority never rests with females,* their laws in this respect resembling those of France. Great honour indeed is paid to the princesses, ample possessions set apart for them, and they are provided with a retinue of Nairs. And, as in case of a failure of heirs to the crown, the Rajah may not adopt a successor without the consent of the princesses, it has sometimes happened that by refusing this, they have for a time held the reins of Government. An instance of this occurred in the family of Signati, in which a Ranee reigned for several years: this, properly speaking, was but an interregnum. In some cases, again, the princesses and the other tributary Rajahs cannot agree as to whom they shall admit into the royal family.

There are four principal royal houses in Malabar, those of Travancore, Cochin, the Zamorin, and Colastri. In order to get a clear idea of the condition of Malabar, we must examine these in detail: for which purpose we must bear in mind the following rules.

First. That these four royal houses consist of princesses, whose sons are in the line of succession to the throne.

Second. That the eldest princess bears the title of queen mother, though it may happen that her son is not the reigning Rajah.

Third. That the minor kingdoms are called by the names of these families.

* The system of polyandry prevails among the Nair race, and it is owing to this custom that in cases of heirdom to the throne, or succession to property, the descent is recognized only in the female line; the nephew, not the son, becomes the heir.—See Buchanan's Journey into Malabar, Vol. 2, p. 411, 513.—H. D.

Fourth. That the first or superior Rajah being a descendant of the oldest princess, is designated by the name of the kingdom to which he belongs, though but a portion of it may be under his rule. The younger Rajahs, descended from the younger sisters, lose their family name. They are bound to obey the first, who is styled the *Molpad* or head.

The first of these kingdoms is Travancore in the south, which stretches along the sea coast from Cape Comorin to Porcad. Attingal, Signati, Peritalli, Ellida Seruvan, Marta, Kully Quilon, Tirkenapolie, and Panapolie are comprehended in this kingdom.

Attingal is the name of the maternal house of the Rajah of Travancore, who rules over the country lying between Tengepatnam and Paroor, three leagues south of the fortress of Quilon. Madura, which used to be comprehended in his territory, has been lately severed from it. In all Malabar there is no queen mother who possesses so much influence in public affairs as here. These Travancore Rajahs would willingly have entered into alliance with the East India Company, only they would never consent to pledge themselves to part with all their pepper to them alone; knowing that they could obtain a higher price for the article elsewhere: the Danes at Eddawa and the English at Anjengo at the present day buy it at the rate of 15 or 16 ducats per kandy, while the East India Company give only 12 ducats.

Signati is the name of the second family, descended from a younger sister of Travancore. Its territory extends from Paroor (where the East India Company have a station, established for the despatch of letters, and also as an outpost to watch over the soldiers at Quilon, lest they should attempt to desert to the English at Anjengo) to Coomaragom Politooi.

This kingdom is sub-divided into three portions, the first belonging to the Rajah, who therefore bears the name of Signati; the second to the Poele Barriatte; the third to the Goeryp of Travancore. This division originated with three co-heiresses, sisters of the house of Signati. The present Rajah of Signati is overbearing and haughty. The East India Company with difficulty keep on good terms with him, and his share in the pepper contract is performed with no good will. The fort of Quilon is situated within his territories and serves in some measure as a check upon his insolence. The country is for the most part high and rocky, and though in one direction watered by streams, it is too elevated for

the cultivation of rice or paddy, but it is well wooded, and large quantities of areca nuts are dried there and forwarded to the Coast. It is also famous for its palm wine or Quilon arrack, which supplies this neighbourhood abundantly.

The Rajah of Peritalli, sprung from the third sister of Attingal, governs the district between Quilon and the mountains. Kully Quilon is at the present time united to his country by adoption. It possesses no sea coast.

Ellidaseruwan, situated between Madura and Travancore, belongs to the progeny of a younger sister of Travancore.

Marta or Carnagapoli, lying between the river of Quilon or Arooveekuray and the village of Allapan along the shore, is subject to the Rajah of Kully Quilon, its borders encroaching with irregular outline on his kingdom and on that of Signati.

Kully Quilon stretches along the Coast: a portion running inland between Quilon and Porcad. It contains a good bazaar or market place, where all kinds of wares are sold. The East India Company have a factory in the interior. At the mouth of the river there is a preventive station.

Tercunapalli Rajah is a powerful monarch of great authority; a small portion of his territory borders on Kully Quilon and Porcad, and it stretches inland to Bittimeni.

Panapoli lies in the interior behind Kully Quilon, and its family having died out, it has devolved by adoption on the Rajah of that place. This forms the extremity of the kingdom of Travancore, between which and that of Cochin is another kingdom, independent of them both.

This is called Tekkenkoor, and lies beyond the lake called the Broad River. The Rajah possesses a beautiful territory, superior to any other I have yet seen in Malabar. The level part is low, and planted with rice; in the vicinity of the mountains the land is elevated, and produces pepper, cardamum, and wax in great abundance. This country is also very populous, and possesses good roads and a fresh and pleasant climate. The Bishop Mar. Gabriel resides in it, his church and dwelling being situated on a hill, along the foot of which runs a river. The Rajah lives on the other side of the river in the plain, having a neat palace, according to the native fashion. He is very courteous; and as soon as he heard from the Bishop of my arrival, he came with all haste from his country house at five miles distance to visit me, and presented me with two golden bracelets.

The second great royal house of Malabar is that of Cochin,

which is to us the most noticeable, both because the capital of the East India Company, Cochin, is situated in it, and also because the Company has made a very close alliance with it, styling itself the protector of the kingdom of Cochin. As a mark of this, the Rajah wears in his crown the arms of the Company. The hereditary princes of Cochin consisted formerly of five families, which have been reduced by death to three, those of Paliat, Montata Viese, and Shalour; these were continually quarrelling for the supreme authority, till the Portuguese mixed in the business, when the dispute burst into an open war. Montata Viese withdrew into the North, and brought all the princes of that part over to his side; whilst Paliat and Shalour were aided by those of the South. At length the Rajah of Paliat, the last of his mother's family, died; when the Portuguese worked upon the queen mother to adopt a stranger of the family of Bettette and Aivoer, good friends of theirs. This family became so powerful by the help of the Portuguese, that when the Rajah of the house of Shalour died, the crown fell into the hands of four bold princes, adopted sons of the house of Bettette, who compelled the princes of Shalour to take to flight, and join those of the house of Montata Viese. Their united forces could however find no means of recovering the kingdom and succession; partly on account of the power of the Portuguese, and partly because the Nairs and land owners were favourable to the princes of Bettette. At length they repaired to their great enemy the Zamorin, who took advantage of the opportunity to conclude a secret treaty both with them and with the Rajahs of Northern Cochin, in which it was agreed that the house of Montata Viese should be reinstated in possession of the crown; under promise that the latter should make compensation to the Zamorin for all the expenses he might incur during the war, and should leave in his hands, till this stipulation should be fulfilled, all the lands and strong places they might together conquer. Upon this, the Zamorin was immediately received by the lords of Narduveltenaad, Monadenaade, Billeastenaade, and Monnea Suta Pamboory, as Protector of their lawful sovereign. Affairs were in this state when Malabar was conquered by the East India Company; who, having deposed the Rajah of the house of Bettette, their enemy, restored that of Montata Viese to their lawful inheritance of the kingdom of Cochin. Meanwhile a dispute arose between the Zamorin and the Rajah of Cochin, the latter demanding the restora-

tion of all the lands belonging to his kingdom of which the former was in possession; whilst the Zamorin maintained that by the conditions of the treaty he was not bound to comply until he had been repaid for all the expenses of the war. This dispute lasted till a war broke out between the East India Company and the Zamorin, in which the Rajah of Cochin also became involved; when with the aid of the Company's arms, Cranganoor being conquered, he recovered a great portion of the lands which the Zamorin had seized from him. Some other places in the Cochin territory still remained under the power of the Zamorin, but these in succeeding wars have from time to time been wrested from him. This is the foundation of the reciprocal claims of the Zamorin and the Cochin Rajah on each other, which have continually kindled wars between them.

These events show the dangers of adopting a son among the princes of a strange family; for this is often the cause of desperate wars, the weaker party seeking and finding assistance from the stronger. It is also to be apprehended, if a powerful prince of another family is adopted into that of Cochin, that the Rajah of that country will become too powful for the East India Company, and that thus the title of Protector, which it now bears, would be an empty one; and more than this, if that Rajah should ever become superior in power to the Zamorin, instead of being, as he now is, inferior, he might lose his respect for our arms, and even go to war with us.

The territories of the Rajah of Cochin are of considerable extent; to him appertain the island of Cochin, and a great portion of the higher country, but it is all so much broken up and divided that it is impossible to determine accurately the boundaries of his kingdom. To him have devolved:—

Mouton, bounded by Porcad on the south, and on the north by the free lordship of Paliat; to it belong also some districts on the other side of the great river. Mouton has fallen into the possession of the family of Cochin through adoption.

Cocronaad, a territory of great extent which has devolved upon Cochin, extending along the mountain chain to the district of the seven Caimals, and terminating on the river bank opposite to Cochin, called in the country by the name of Antjecaimals. Two market days are held there weekly, when the Canarese and Jews purchase provisions for themselves and for the inhabitants both within and without the city, consisting of butter, rice, fruit, salt, &c.

Vypeen, an island just opposite the city, bounded on one side by the sea, on the other by the river, where most of the Topasses live and have their principal church. This island affords a pleasant prospect to the city, being well planted with cocoanut trees; it runs up as far as Aicotte, and is about 4 leagues in length. The deaconry has some property on this island, and another portion belongs to the Rajah; but the greater part is the possession of the Paliat, who is considered the lord of the island.

Cranganoor, a small kingdom belonging to the Rajah of that name. Here the East India Company possesses a small fort, which in the time of the Portuguese was a town; in former days the Zamorin's palace was here, but he has been gradually expelled from the place. The Rajah of this place is poor, and therefore of small consideration.

Iyroor, the royal family of Cranganoor which possesses in the south Pooden and Jatecoil, and in the east Marianki, and other lands belonging to Cochin.

Besides these, Cochin has four tributary Rajahs, who are considered the pillars of the kingdom. These princes are independent, but are bound to respect the Rajah as their chief, who settles the disputes of the kingdom, and whom they must aid against the common enemy. They may, however, have private wars amongst themselves, and even against the Rajah. Their names are Porcad and Berkenkoer in the south of Cochin, and Paroor and Mangatti in the north.

Porcad is subject to a spiritual prince. It was formerly governed by twelve Brahmins, one of whom in the end raised himself to the throne, in the following manner. The eleven eldest Brahmins were in the habit of making a butt of the youngest, whom they treated as half-witted. Their victim not knowing how to defend himself, acted like a second Brutus, resolving in his own mind to have his revenge in due time. At length, it happened that 2,000 Nairs, having on some dissatisfaction, deserted from the Zamorin, went about offering their services, and were every where refused. But, they came to Porcad, and offered themselves to the twelve Brahmins, as chance would have it, the eleven elder ones were all together at the time, and sent them in jest to the youngest, who was bathing, telling the soldiers he was their chief. The Nairs did as they were bid, and going to the youngest Brahmin, informed him that the others had sent them to him as their chief. He, understanding their mockery, seized the opportunity for his own advantage, to re-

venge himself for their insults. He informed the soldiers that he was the chief, and that he would take them into his service on condition that they should obey him before all others, and perform all his commands; he then promised them rich rewards if they would put the eleven other Brahmins to death. The soldiers consenting joyfully, he led them straight to the pagoda, where the other Brahmins were collected. He then commanded them to perform their business, and the words were scarcely said when it was done. His eleven companions being dead, he took the key of the pagoda, opened it, took out the treasure box, paid the soldiers liberally, and made himself monarch. In this dignity he and his heirs have maintained themselves to the present day. His deed was one which may well be likened to that of Brutus, with whom I have already compared him. The country of Porcad is very productive of rice and all the necessaries of life, so that this Rajah is one of the wealthiest in Malabar; he has not however many Nairs, in the place of whom he is served by Chegos. The Company's factory in this place has fallen into decay, being as it were swallowed up by the sea; a new one should be erected there; but, as the Rajah wishes that it should be on the model of the old one, whilst the Commandant desires to have a good factory, adapted both for a dwelling and for a pepper-magazine, the work has been up to this time suspended. The Rajah begins now, however, to lower his tone, as they withhold the pepper grants from him, and threaten to remove the factory to Chanamungalom, to which place the pepper can easily be conveyed over the great river from Tekkenkoor and Berkenkoor. Porcad lies between Tekkenkoor, Berkenkoor and Kully Quilon.

Berkenkoor lies nearer to Cochin than Porcad, abutting on one side on the great river and on the other mountains; it is the second royalty of the kingdom, and produces pepper, cardamom, and wax.

In the north of Cochin and in the interior, lie Paroor and Mangatti; they are close together, Paroor being nearer the coast in the direction of Cranganoor. Paroor is a powerful, ecclesiastical Rajah. His country is fruitful in rice, cattle and other articles of food. The present Rajah is prudent and crafty, and lives in friendship with the Commandant Hertenberg; though, during the late war, the former Commandant mistrusted him, fearing that he had a secret understanding with the Zamorin: this however has never been proved.

Mangatti is the fourth and last royalty of the kingdom of Cochin, extending from Paroor to the mountains. In this country is the renowned river of Mangatti, where the Portuguese had formerly a celebrated bathing place, called *Fiera d'Alva*,* respecting which they held some superstition; higher up there is a no less celebrated spot, to which several native Christians resort on a certain day, to be cleansed and sprinkled with the water. Some of the Romanists assert that this river was derived from the Jordan, others that it cured all sicknesses, and even that it cleansed linen without being washed; nonsense which is not worth contradicting. It is indeed true that the water of this river is purer and more wholesome than any other hereabouts, and that those who drink it do not often get the Cochin disorder; the ships of the East India Company, and the principal personages here, are furnished with it. In the hot season many people go to this river for the sake of bathing, and erect booths along the shores, or on the sandy spots which are met with here and there. On one of these spots stands a heathen pagoda, made only of *olas*, in which they celebrate their religious services during the fine season; as the rainy season approaches, when the waters rise, this temple is removed. From this it would seem that the heathens also have some superstition regarding this river. In this kingdom are two families, those of Bettette and Kartatavyd, one of the latter house being the present Rajah, though that of Bettette is otherwise the most powerful.

Having thus described the two first royal houses, we will give a cursory glance on the two remaining: those of the Zamorin and of Colastri, both situated in the north.

The former is a very powerful monarch whose influence has been much exalted by his arms, though at the present day his splendour has been considerably diminished in consequence of the wars waged upon him by the East India Company. He has a numerous and brave army, in which respect he is superior to all the other princes, who consequently are much in dread of him; but it is quite a fiction to say that he is master of Malabar. Under him are—Onneterie, comprising the country behind Cranganoor as far as the river of Chetwa, which was formerly subject to the Zamorin and a portion of his kingdom, and here was situated

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* **Ahlwhye or Alwaye is fourteen miles from Cochin, and is still a favourite resort among Europeans for bathing during the hot months. The houses are picturesquely situated on the banks of the river.—H. D.**

his fort of Paponette; but in the war of 1716 he was driven from the whole of this country, which fell into the hands of the Company, who possess here enough fields of rice, to feed almost the whole garrison.

There is a new fort built in the corner of the country at the mouth of the river Chetwa, called Fort William, intended as a defence against the enterprises of this Rajah.

Palingery Nairo, situated on the opposite bank of the Chetwa river and stretching in the north close to the river Ponany.

Repoecoil in the south, bordered by the country of Panepacoil and extending in the north as far as Calicut. Here the maternal house of the Zamorin reside, and the Rajah has his residence and court at Ponany, where the Company also have a station and maintain an accountant to keep a watch over the mercantile proceedings of the Zamorin, and to give intelligence of what passes to the Commandant.

Tameras Gerye, which is situated south of Calicut, and is bounded on the north by the territory of Geringal Namboori. This is the last of the Zamorin's provinces towards the sea shore.

Geringal Namboori is a spiritual lord, whose lands extend from Balenoor in the kingdom of Colastri in the north, to the river Cottesal. The most famous pirates inhabit his territories who make prey of vessels engaged in the inland navigation between Calicut and Cananoor, and even advance beyond Calicut to the borders of Cochin. They are called *Cotta Marrekarre.*

The fourth and last royal family of Malabar, named Colastri, was compelled by force of arms to conclude an alliance with the East India Company, when they deprived the Portuguese by craft of Cananoor; since which time they have remained good friends, though they would never engage in the pepper contracts. The best cardamom is found in this kingdom; this, which is round in form and more delicate in taste than the other species, is the only kind which the East India Company buy for exportation to Europe and elsewhere. The royal family consists of four branches, of which the present representatives, both male and female, are so numerous that they live in great poverty for the most part, though it is true that the state is well managed and that it possesses a good army: knowing this, the Zamorin seldom ventures to invade this kingdom, and the Rajah of Maisjoer, who is lord of an extensive terri-

tory, has encroached but little or not at all upon it. This kingdom is bounded in the south by the kingdom of the Zamorin, and in the north it extends to Canara.

In this territory the following Rajahs are comprehended:—

Balenoor, stretching along the coast from the river Cottesal in the south to the river of Oermapatam in the north; it contains several nests of robbers, as Tritrambiere, Bergaree, Moetingal, Tjombaas, and Niagillie. Towards the east it extends as far as the territories of the powerful free prince Perreveacoeil.

Perreveacoeil borders to the south on the country of the Zamorin, and to the south-east on that of Maisjoer; here is found the best cardamom, and in the greatest quantities.

Dermapatam, Cananoor, Welliapatam and Marravy are situated along the shore, bordering on Balenoor. This is the peculiar possession and inheritance of the family of Colastri.

Tallachery Mocta Nairo to the east of Dermapatam, circumscribes the territory of Colastri at the back, and in the north reaches Tjoenette Verre Caimal, in which district is also situated the English fort Tellicherry. To this succeeds Tjoenette Verre Caimal, which to the north again, is bounded by Allerte Serte Caimal; the latter stretches inland to Maisjoer, but northward towards the sea is bounded by Allerte Addavodde. This last district concludes the kingdom of Malabar, bordering on the territory of Canara.

I have thus placed before you a small picture of the principal territories of Malabar, in the order in which they join each other; some indeed I have not mentioned, either because they are so small, or because they are situated in the mountains, where we are not well acquainted with the topography. But if you wish to know all the petty principalities and provinces, which lie there, I will take some opportunity to send you a list of the Nairs, whom all the lords of Malabar both small and great retain in their service: when I will also mention the names of these princes and lords.

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# LETTER X.

Laws of the Malabars—Strange manner of laying a seizure on the property of another—Their trials by ordeal, sometimes thrusting the fingers into boiling oil, sometimes the hand into a basket containing a Cobra capella, sometimes swimming through a river inhabited by crocodiles—Strange occurrence—Their prisons—The rights they possess over slaves.—Sales and purchases.

As you have acquired fame by your knowledge of jurisprudence, you may like to hear something about the native laws here.

Their legal suits are tried according to old customs *vivâ voce.* No lengthy proceedings are required to obtain the decision of the causes which are always concluded within a few days by the fiat of the Rajah, who in obscure cases consults with his Brahmins.

For laying the property of another in arrest, the warrant of a magistrate is not required; any private individual may do it; so that a man of low caste has it in his power to harass and annoy a Brahmin or a Caimal, through his lands and properties. The Rajahs possess the same power over each other. However, although license is not required for the performance of this embargo, the Rajah's authority is necessary to settle the affair; both parties must appear before him, and after duly weighing the merits of the case, and receiving a sum of money, he gives judgment. When Rajahs thus arrest each other's property, it is a fruitful ground for wars and dissensions: mediators are sometimes called in to arrange the matter.

The token of this embargo or arrest, is the leaf of a cashew nut or other tree which is tied on the article thus arrested, or if it be land, it is stuck up on a stick, the party exercising this privilege announcing, "this is the *Rama*, or arrest of the Rajah." After this no one may gather the fruits off the lands or remove the token; such act would be considered crimes of lese majesty. The East India Company exercise the same right, and on such occasions they plant their

flag on the spot: but this is only done by order of the Commandant or the proper authorities. In the lands subject to the Company, the Commandant may remove any *rama* placed by a native. The residents in the small outlying stations, are obliged to suffer the ramas of the Malabars, and are allowed to exercise the same privilege on their side.

The Resident of Poread told me an entertaining anecdote on this subject. He had once caused a rafter to be brought to the station for the repair of the factory; when it was close to the building, a Nair came and fastened a *rama* to it, upon which the coolies who were carrying it, ran away, as it was illegal for them to touch it any longer. The Resident being informed of what had occurred immediately planted the Company's rama on the spot, so that the parties who were so ready with their arrest, were themselves arrested; and compelled to stand without stirring a foot in the heat of the sun, until such time as the first *rama* was removed by order of the Rajah, then the Resident released them.

In a similar manner, when the Rajah owes money to a Brahmin who can adduce satisfactory proof of the debt, the creditor can demand the money of the Rajah, three distinct times, and if the Rajah still delays payment, the Brahmin brings a rama from a pagoda, when the Rajah may neither eat, sleep or bathe till the dispute is settled and the rama removed. Such cases however do not often happen, for the people know that monarchs have long arms.

Dubious cases in which no proof can be obtained, must be decided by solemn oaths, which are ordinary in common affairs, but extraordinary where the cause is still difficult and important. When a dispute arises between two parties about a loan or debt of which there is no proof, the debtor and creditor go together to the pagoda; and having each given four fanams or one shilling to the priest, they are led to a wooden post, upon which the creditor lays a sum of money equal to that to which he lays claim. This is a solemn attestation before their gods of the lawfulness of the debt, which the other party is then bound to pay. As, however, this mode of swearing may be false, it is firmly believed among them that a person who has perjured himself in this way will meet with a great misfortune within three months.

The extraordinary oaths which are taken in important causes, are very perilous, and resemble the trials by ordeal used formerly in Europe in the superstitious ages. When a man is charged with a heavy crime, which cannot be proved

or which he will not confess, a *tisal* or pan containing cocoa-nut oil is brought and heated in the presence of the Rajah and his courtiers and Brahmins; the accused is then asked whether he will confess the deed, and, if he refuses, he raises his eyes to heaven, imploring the protection of the gods in the defence of his righteous cause, and then plunging his thumb and two first fingers into the boiling oil he pulls out a ring placed at the bottom of the pan. This being done, a *pandyt* or physician comes and binds up the three fingers with Pisang leaves, which must be left on them for three days; if at the end of this time the flesh where the skin has been burnt off is white, he is pronounced innocent, but if black, he is punished as a perjured man.

There is another ordeal, by snakes or Cobra capellas. When a man will not confess a crime, they take a mantle and wrap up in it one of these reptiles, which are not only poisonous, but are also reckoned sacred by them; after calling on the gods, the accused must thrust his hand into the mantle and lift up the snake. If he be bitten, he is considered guilty. Another ordeal takes place in a river or tank in which crocodiles are found. The *Cayman's* (alligator's) pagoda on the river Cranganoor close to Paliporte is especially famous for this process. A small heathen temple stands on the bank of this river, in which two crocodiles have for a long time been supported, their daily food being thrown into the water, so that they are induced by the bait to remain there. To undergo this ordeal, the accused is compelled, after a solemn profession of innocence in the presence of the Brahmins and nobles, and of a great concourse of people, to swim across this river and back; or if he cannot do this he must be dragged through, holding on with his hands to a boat. If the crocodile pulls him under, it is a sign of his guilt; if otherwise, he is released as innocent.

The people of Malabar tell a strange story to confirm this ordeal. There were two brothers who inherited equally from their father; one of them secretly stole and concealed a large sum of money, and on being accused of the fraud by his brother, denied it, upon which he was compelled to take the oath by ordeal in the river. The fraudulent party, thinking to deceive the gods, having hidden the gold in his turban, handed it over to some one else, and then swore that he had not got his brother's inheritance—thinking that as the stolen property was in another person's hand, with the turban, it could not be reckoned as his; after this, he sprang

into the river, swam uninjured across it and back, and was therefore pronounced innocent. But, a wonderful occurrence took place afterwards; for, as the perjured man, fearing nothing further, took back his turban, and stood by the river to wash his feet, a crocodile leaped up the bank, seized him by the legs, dragged him into the river, and devoured him. The spectators, aghast at such an occurrence, took up the turban which he had let drop, examined it more closely, and discovered the gold concealed in it; by which they perceived the cunning of the swearer, and the justice of their gods. I leave the truth or falsehood of this tale for what it is worth; one thing is certain, that these ordeals are not to be depended on, but that the ceremonies used, the danger, and their own superstition combine to cause criminals rather to confess, than to submit to these perilous ordeals.

The prisons of Malabar are of a peculiar construction, and are generally situated in the square of their royal courts. They are not heavy edifices of stone, nor furnished with iron gratings and strong bars, but are mere quadrangular enclosures, the size of a man in length, breadth, and height, made of wooden gratings nailed together. Above them is a small loft where the Nairs who guard the prisoners pass the night and usually take a nap. Such prisons as these would in Europe be more fit to keep fowls than human beings. The prisoners often escape from them, as did some Canarese lately, who had robbed their idol's temple. The Rajah confines in these prisons not only great criminals, but those who are condemned to pay him a fine for some misdemeanour; these seldom escape, as they would not wish to be banished from their country for the sake of a little money.

Among legal matters may be included the rights masters possess regarding the sale of their slaves. The Pulleahs are born slaves. Every zemindar, prince or wealthy Nair, has a certain number of them whose children are also born in slavery. But as these poor creatures form a peculiar and numerous caste, they have certain privileges granted them, which secure their maintenance, so that none may perish from want. Their masters are not bound to give them daily nourishment, but in the Malabár country they have the right of building and planting, for which labours they receive settled wages paid either in fanams or in measures of rice; and the estates on which they work may belong either to their own master or to some body else; for if their own master be not in want of out-of-door labour they may seek

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it elsewhere, always taking care under risk of punishment to appear before him at his summons.

When the paddy is cut they receive the tenth part in payment, and a sort of black paddy which springs fourteen days afterwards called *Neerab* is also their perquisite. Their masters have power to put them to death, without being called to account, or, if they please, to sell them; though this is not often done without some good reason.

In cases of indigence, a Pulleah uncle and mother may sell a child, but not for more than 60 fanams; and if a higher price were to be given, it would be of no use to them, as the proprietor would take the overplus. The eldest born, whether son or daughter, of a Pulleah couple is the property of the owner of the father, and the other children belong to the owner of the mother, who has also a right of redeeming the first child for the sum of 16 fanams whether the possessor like it or not. Among Europeans these things are quite different, for the master of the mother has a right to all the children, there being no legal form of marriage among the slaves. With us, too, a master or mistress may strike or chastise, but not kill a slave. And if a slave were to complain of gross ill treatment from his master or mistress and after a strict examination it were to be found that the alleged cruelties were true, he might obtain his freedom, or his master might be compelled to sell him to another. If a slave were to raise his hand to strike his master or mistress, or otherwise injure them he might be punished by death. A freed slave may give evidence, but not one in servitude. No one may sell his slave to a heathen, Jew, or Turk, for by so doing he would place his soul in peril.

To return to the Malabars; Rajahs and Princes may sell, besides Pulleahs, men of other castes, Nairs, Chegos, &c., who have committed any crime by which they have lost caste and are liable to capital punishment. No Rajah has power to sentence to execution a Brahmin or a Canarese, however heinous his crime; but he may cause his eyes to be torn out, or his hand to be cut off, by which he would be dishonoured and expelled from his caste. Capital punishment is executed in divers methods. The criminal may stand upright and have his head cut off; or he may be shot, for which purpose he is made to stand unfettered and free in an open field, and three or four shots are rapidly discharged at him. If he be not wounded and begin to run away he is pursued and fired at until he is killed, when his body is

thrown into the river. Sometimes they empale criminals alive, piercing a sharp pointed stick right through the body, which soon puts an end to his life.

I shall conclude this letter with an account of the sales and loans of the Malabars, which, though they are of various kinds, may be reduced under five heads :

1. There is the complete sale, called *Ate Patta*, which does not often take place ; when a person resigns all right over a garden or estate which he has sold ; and the foundary of this deed runs thus ; that he renounces stone and mud, splinters and thorns, snakes, great and small, and everything within the four corners of the estate to him and to his successors. If the estate is situated on the river bank, the number of feet to which it extends in the water is also certified.

2. There is a mode of loan called *Patta* which is very common, and can only be explained by an example. Thus, supposing a man has a garden worth 10,000 fanams, he sells it for 8,000f. or 9,000f., retaining for the remainder of the value the right to the proprietorship of the estate ; for these 1,000f. or 2,000f. the purchaser must pay an annual interest. If the seller wishes at the end of some years to buy back his estate, he must restore the 8,000 or 9,000 fanams, and pay in addition the sum of money that shall have been fixed by men commissioned to value the improvements made upon the property in the interim by fresh plantations of cocoapalms or other fruit trees. But if the purchaser or tenant becomes weary of the estate and wishes to force it back on the original possessor, he can do so only at a loss of 20 per cent.

3. *Berampatta* is a complete lease, similar to those which take place among us.

4. *Kararna* is a species of exchange :—one man lends a garden to another worth, for instance, 6,000f. and borrows that sum in return for an appointed term of years, during which the fruits of the garden serve for interest.

5. *Nierpatta* :—A landlord gives to some individual a piece of waste land for building or for planting with cocoapalms, and receives no interest for it until the trees are so high that a Camak sitting on an elephant can reach a leaf of them with his stick. A small sum of money is however paid beforehand for the use of the land ; when the trees have attained the height above mentioned the garden is taxed according to its value, and rent paid accordingly.

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# LETTER XI.

Revenues of the Rajahs of Cochin.—Their mode of Government.—Accounts of the National Assembliee collected in cases of emergency.

THE Malabar States, in common with all others in the world, possess certain fixed revenues and funds for replenishing the treasury, and maintaining royal pomp, and the welfare of the state; though here the Rajah's incomes are not very large or out of the common. Their chief profits are derived from their private estates, and the inferior princes are often richer than the reigning sovereign, being possessed of larger free and hereditary properties.

Merchandize is a source of great gain to monarchs whose territories are on the coast, for which reason these Malabar Rajahs have taken so eagerly to commerce. Why, when the Portuguese first visited these coasts, did the Moors possess so much influence over the Zamorin? Because they, at that time the only maritime traders, procured him so much profit that he feared to disturb them by the reception of strangers.

Ten per cent. is the duty levied on all goods imported into the kingdom of Cochin by private and native merchants, and the profits derived from it are divided between the Company and the Rajah. The latter obtained this privilege originally from the Portuguese, and since their expulsion the East India Company have confirmed him in the enjoyment of it, introducing however some changes in the rate of the duties—the Portuguese having imposed different amounts of duty on different nations, as appears from the following list, on the imports—

| | |
|---|---|
| the Moors paid | 7 per cent. to the Rajah.<br>3 per cent. to Portugal. |
| the Benjanese " | 5 per cent. to the Rajah.<br>3 per cent. to Portugal. |
| the Canarese " | 5 per cent. to the Rajah.<br>3 per cent. to Portugal. |



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But, now, these restrictions are done away with, all paying 10 per cent., of which 6 goes to the Rajah and 4 to the Company. The duty on exports is 6 per cent.

All goods imported by the Company, and those forwarded by them to their settlements and factories elsewhere, are free. There is no rate of tolls fixed for the merchandize of foreign nations, such as French, English, as they are not allowed to trade at the Company's factories. To the Portuguese alone has been conceded by long custom, permission to dispose of sweetmeats, eatables, &c., brought from China, when they put in here on the passage to Goa, paying on these a duty of 4 per cent. to the Company and 6 per cent. to the Rajah. The Company and the Rajah each appoint an officer to collect these dues.

The duty on native commodities, such as pepper, which amounts here to half a ducat per kandy, is paid by the merchant who sells them, and not by the Company. The dues are heavier in the south.

There are certain estates in Malabar, whose owners are obliged to pay an annual tribute in recognition of their proprietorship to the Rajah; this is regarded rather as a free will offering than a tax.

All merchandizes conveyed by inland navigation pay a *junkara* or toll of 1 per cent. to the Rajah, the merchants entering the gross amount of their cargo at the *junkenaars* or custom houses, (which are curious edifices, built on piles in the water); small as this tax is, it presses heavily enough on the inhabitants, as there are a great many of these custom houses. All vessels bearing the Company's flag, are free and exempt from examination. The duties on tobacco from Coedenatti, Coechim, and Oediampoor are a source of considerable emolument to the Rajah. The native tobacco is somewhat raw in taste; no doubt it would be much nicer if they understood the art of preparing it as they do in Europe; for here the leaves are tied up in bundles and sent off before they are properly dried. In Kully Quilon, Porcad, and Quilon, tobacco from Java is principally used which is brought by the natives in their annual visits to these shores. The Patterys who are employed in the inland conveyance of goods, pay a fanam in every kingdom through which they travel, for the packs which they carry on their backs; but there is no charge on those which are carried on the head; so we always see them loaded with two packs, one carried on the shoulder and the other on the head.

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All gardens situated in Carraparam pay a tenth on their fruits to the Rajah of Cochin, who is the sole lord *(volkomen meester)* of the land. He receives a smaller proportion in other places.

On all debts discharged under sentence from the Rajah he receives 20 per cent. Mothers present an offering on the birth of their children. He is the inheritor of the property of all, whether Heathens, Moors, or Jews, who die without heirs, and this sometimes when there are blood relations living. He receives an acknowledgment in money for every office or dignity he confers. If he despatches any of his guards to the assistance of any one he expects a valuable present in return. The visits paid him by his subjects always bring in something, and this is especially the case on their first introductions to him, or if they have any favours to demand. The offerings which they bring, consisting of stuffs, money, fruit, or any thing else, they must deposit at his feet; and this custom is so universal in Malabar that if the natives have any favour to ask of the Commandant, they always bring him presents of pigs, fruit, or poultry.

We must also take into consideration the fines paid by criminals: for the right of passing sentence being vested in the Rajah of each State, they understand how to make the most of the opportunity of making the criminals bleed well in their purses, and there is hardly any crime which may not be expiated by money.

All ruminating animals, such as oxen, cows, buffaloes, belong to the Rajah, as well as those that have five or six tents.

All people, whether of high or low caste, who have transgressed against the distinctions of caste, belong to the Rajah, who generally sells them. No one may wear whiskers, except by his permission, for which a fine or acknowledgment must be paid, and then a great banquet is celebrated in honour of these whiskers.

All leases, renewals of contract, &c., bring him in a small sum, and all deeds of gift and sale must be renewed at the accession of every new monarch. On the death of a feoffee *(Leenman)* his heir must renew the deed of gift, purchase or fief *(gift koop-endeen)* and pay for it.

A gift for maintenance (gift tot onderhoud) conferred by the Rajah on any one who subsequently dies without legitimate heirs, reverts to the Rajah.

All the chiefs of the Mocquas, Chegos, Cannekaas, &c., must pay an annual sum to the Rajah for their dignity.

All Christians, Jews and Moors, wishing to obtain license to use drums and wind instruments at their festivities and merry makings must present an offering when they demand the Rajah's permission. Persons of low caste must do the same in order to obtain permission to wear the *roemal* or fillet round the head, gold rings, &c.

It would seem that the income derived from all these sources ought to be sufficient to maintain the regal state handsomely, but as their dominions are for the most part very limited, the petty Rajahs are generally poor. The greater Rajahs may amass a considerable fortune, the more as their expenditure is small.

I shall now add a few words on the mode in which the Government is conducted. The Rajah is supreme in those dominions which are immediately subject to him, but not in the free inheritances which belong to the minor Rajahs and Caimals, for every one is sole lord in his own territories. They know little of assemblies, councils or parliaments. The Rajah chooses his favourites at his pleasure, consulting them in particular cases, but generally being guided solely by his own will, unless that will should run entirely counter to the customs of the country. Many keep near them a Brahmin to instruct them in the fundamental and long established laws and customs.

The only checks upon their arbitrary power are the general assemblies of the nation, which are however, but seldom held. These are of two kinds: one assembled under orders of the Rajah, the other by the spontaneous will of the people. Many years elapse between the recurrence of these assemblies. Those summoned by the Rajah are conducted as follows: He despatches messengers, who by birth and descent are entitled to this office, in all directions to summon the people. When collected, they sit down in a circle in the open air, a number of Nairs keeping guard around them. The propositions are then discussed and measures rejected or adopted by unanimous silence or clamour. But, in affairs of minor importance not affecting the welfare of the whole community, the chiefs of the nation alone are summoned, and decide upon the question.

The assemblies collected by the will of the nation are conducted in much the same manner, but with more impetuosity. These are never held except in cases of emergency when the Rajah is guilty of extreme tyranny or gross violation of the law. Then, all the land proprietors (landesheeren) are bid-

den to attend, and any one who dared refuse to obey the summons would be subjected by the assembly to the devastation of his gardens, houses, estates, tanks, &c., and, if he were to persist in his obstinacy would be liable to be deprived of his privileges and votes, or even to be sentenced to banishment. As the object of these assemblies is to thwart the will of the Rajah, we are not surprised to find that he does all in his power to obstruct their deliberations. He has no right to attempt to put them down by force of arms, and, besides, so many thousands flock to these meetings that he would find difficulty in so doing if he tried: so he sends a troop of lads called *Pandera Putte* with instructions to provoke them with all manner of annoyances, and to pelt them with stones, sand and dirt. The Nairs on guard do all they can to keep off the assailants with their shields.

If any one, provoked past endurance, were to strike and hurt one of these youths, it would by their laws be regarded as a crime of treason *(geschondene majesteit)* the assembly would be involved in a heavy fine, and be deprived of its inviolability; and the Rajah might then proceed against them by arms; if he were to fail in subduing them they would all desert their allegiance. Allies and neighbours do their best to remedy all the mischief thence ensuing, and endeavour so to intercede between the parties that every one is confirmed in his rights.

The guards (Schuttsmannen) are a body of men employed by the Rajah in the defence of any pagoda or estate to the possession of which their right is disputed. These guards are bound to defend such places at risk of their lives, and to attack the assailants, for whose death they are not held responsible. They do not fear death in the cause, knowing that the Rajah whom they serve is pledged by the laws to revenge their blood. So powerful is the love of revenge in these nations, that in hopes of obtaining it they are willing to encounter death itself, and no reconciliation can ever be brought about until full satisfaction has been taken for the offence.

Thus are public affairs conducted in Malabar, in a very different way from our proceedings in Europe, where each separate nation has its own laws. Meanwhile, I pray the Almighty that he will endow you, who have a share in the management of the Netherland's Exchequer, with wisdom and trust-worthiness in your difficult employment; and subscribe myself.

# LETTER XII.

Of the coinage of India—Rupees, pagodas, &c., and their value—Of the money current among the Europeans and its value—Of the fanams, boeseroks, and cowries.

Sir,—As you have the superintendence of the States' mint, and the charge of that coinage which is used for the service of the world-famous Dutch trade as well as for replenishing the public treasury, you will not be displeased at my addressing to you in the present letter an account of the coins used by the East Indians.

Their current money is of three kinds, the European money, the Heathen, and the Moorish: for, though there are many Jews here, yet as they possess no State of their own, so neither have they any peculiar coinage.

The Moorish pieces which are used in trade throughout India, are the Rupees, which consist of gold and silver, and whole and half rupees. They are stamped with letters on both sides: for the Moors have such a horror of all figures and images that they will not endure even the likeness of a beast—flowers only being admissible. This is soon discovered by traders, who consequently take care not to offer them wares of China or silk having patterns in which animals are introduced. And yet I have seen a set of gold rupees, twelve in number, bearing the twelve signs of the zodiac; together with a small gold penny bearing the likeness of a man, and said to be a representation of Mahomet. Nobody could tell me when or where this last piece was struck: but with regard to the rupees, it is well-known that they were coined by order of a famous Mogul empress, who, possessing entire sway over the mind of the great Mogul, and being immoderately ambitious, desired above all things to perpetuate her name and glory by some extraordinary deed. Nothing was more suitable for this purpose than to strike a new coin: so she issued orders that throughout all parts of her extensive domains, stamps bearing the twelve

signs of the zodiac should be prepared under the care of certain of her faithful servants. She then exerted all her female arts of cajolery to induce the monarch to grant her absolute sway for one single day. This she obtained under certain conditions; and when the day arrived, she despatched swift messengers in all directions with orders that the rupees should be immediately struck, which was accordingly done. The following day when the emperor resumed his authority, he sent round counter orders, to prohibit the coinage, break up the stamps, and call in all the money that had already been struck: but the empress had been beforehand with him, and had caused many thousands of the rupees to be circulated and collected in cabinets, and thus it happens that to this day many Collectors of curiosities, both Christians and Moors, have several of them in their possession. Indeed it is sometimes doubted whether their number has not been increased by false copies.

Of the rupees in actual circulation, the common gold ones are the least useful in trade, and do not always maintain the same standard value beyond the Mogul empire. I have seen them exchanged here for 7½ rix dollars, according to the Indian reckoning. The silver rupee, both half and whole, is used in trade throughout the Indies, and especially in the districts of Bengal and Surat. The Bengal coin is either the Sicca rupee or the Bazaar rupee. Sicca rupees are of two sorts, the new and the old; both being good, but the old the most prized. Bazaar rupees are poor, and are worth at least three stivers* less than the others, in this part of the world. The Surat rupees are also good. They are much the same as the Sicca rupees, and are likewise much used in trade. The value of a rupee is less than its current price, which is five shillings.† But, beyond the Bengal territory no one gives more than four shillings and a half for a Bengal rupee. The silver of the rupee is very fine, and of a better quality than that of the ducats. The English coin rupees at their chief place, Madras, but these are inferior to the rupees of Surat. A rupee is about the size of a shilling in circumference, but its thickness is greater.

The Pagoda is a gold coin struck by the heathens, in value about equal to two rix dollars. It weighs the same as a ducat, but is of inferior quality. It is called a pagoda

* A Dutch coin, equal to about a penny.

† A Dutch shilling is worth about six stivers.

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because it bears the image of an idol on one side: a pagoda being the name for an idol temple. The most valuable are those bearing the impression of three heads. The pagodas with one head are less circulated. There is no image on the reverse, but an impression of holes, resembling the exterior of a thimble.

I have seen two kinds of Japanese coins; the Kobang and the Itzeboo. There are half and whole kobangs: the first equal to five and the last to ten rix dollars. Both are flat oblong pieces of gold, bearing no impression save a kind of sign in the middle, not unlike that with which our Vats are marked. The other coin, the Itzeboo is a small bar, and is seldom or never used by the Europeans in trade.

The coins which Europeans make most use of, are rix dollars, ducatoons, Spanish *matten* and ducats. The Dutch usually compute by rix dollars, and though salaries are counted by gulden in the Company's books, they are generally paid down by the first named coin. Property also is taxed by rix dollars, and they are the medium employed in private commercial transactions. But a rix dollar here is equivalent to 48 stivers, only, instead of 50 as in Europe,—hence people who put their money into the Company's funds to be repaid in Holland, make four per cent. profit, or two stivers on every rix dollar.

The ducatoon is the coin chiefly circulated by the Company in the Indies and particularly at Batavia. It passes for thirteen shillings; thereby affording the Company a clear profit of 2½ shillings on each piece. I must add an observation as to the remarkable ingenuity evinced by the Company in their mode of paying their servants. It is a good specimen of that cunning thriftiness for which they are noted all over the world. In the first place they pay in ducatoons, which always pass current here for thirteen shillings, instead of 10½, and in the second place they pay their light money for heavy, so that their servants for one gulden receive no more than sixteen stivers. And, in addition to this, the inferior officers of the Company receive their pay half in money and half in kind, giving the Company a profit of 50 per cent. on Indian goods and 75 per cent. on home commodities. From all which it appears very plainly that a soldier whose pay is nine gulden only costs his employers four.

This however does not alienate people from their service: for so artfully have they managed the whole concern that their officers, instead of feeling injured, are, on the contrary,

well pleased with the treatment they receive. They are paid at the beginning of every month, so that no one is kept waiting, a punctuality which distinguishes the Dutch above all other Europeans in India. Moreover they give their servants a monthly allowance for board, varying according to their rank, and other compositions of like kind. A soldier receives about four shillings monthly, and rice sufficient for his consumption. An inferior merchant has four rix dollars : chaplains and upper merchants 10½ rix dollars, and also a house or lodging. At Batavia a permanent chaplain receives twelve rix dollars per month to provide lodgings, a pile *(stapel)* of firewood, two quarts *(kan)* of lisbon wine, four quarts of Dutch vinegar, six lbs. of cheese, twelve quarts of sack, twenty four lbs. of Dutch butter, and other articles besides. The same is the case in other places, where, in lieu of money, they receive a house, seven quarts of wine, four lbs. of cheese, one lb. of spices, consisting of cloves, cinnamon, mace and nutmeg (for the Company give or sell these articles, mixed, to their officers in order to prevent private trade in them) one quart of lisbon oil, eight quarts of cocoanut oil for their lamps, half a pile of wood, and drinking water. If to all this we add the 10½ rix dollars for board, I cannot see that our chaplains have any right to complain. Further to obviate all discontent, the Company empower their servants to send over their accounts, signed by the Director General, to Europe, where they may receive their whole salaries without any reduction : but as this course is attended with peril, and persons at distant stations would have a long time to wait for their money, they prefer receiving their salaries with the before mentioned loss.

The Spanish matten, which are here reckoned worth 10 shillings, come from the Manilla or Philippine Islands, the Spaniards bringing them to Batavia for the purchase of linen and cinnamon, to be exported to the West Indies. The Company make considerable profit on this trade.

Ducats are also much used in the Persians' commerce, that nation circulating them in their payments to our Company. The Venetian ducats are the most valuable. The king of Persia receives heavy duties on the ducats, which the Company also are bound to pay. Consequently the price of the ducat is higher here than elsewhere ; and as the Persians sell no great amount of goods to the Company, the latter are bound to receive the ducat at the fixed price, which rises as high as nineteen shillings, though more usually it is 18 or

18½. At Tutecoryn they are valued at 20s. The settlements of Malabar and Ceylon are generally provided with these ducats; the pepper trade being always carried on with that coin, at a firm price of 18s. the ducat.

But now to describe our Malabar specie. It has a good deal of variety, on account of the number of monarchs who possess the right of coinage. The gold and silver pieces are generally called fanams, those of copper or lead, Boeserokken. They differ greatly in value in different places. A fanam of Calicut is worth one shilling, a fanam of Quilon two shillings and a half; while those of Cochin are four to the shilling. It is my intention at present to describe only the Cochin mint, as being that in which the East India Company is concerned.

The Boeserokken are a mixture of lead and tin melted together, and bearing on the one side the arms of the East India Company, and on the other a figure resembling a harp. They are smelted in moulds, several being stuck together at the side, and then cut separate. Sixty of them are equivalent to a Cochin fanam or one stiver and a half, so that if a man were to reckon his capital in this coin he would find himself the possessor of some hundreds of thousands. The Cochin fanams are the common money of that kingdom, made use of both by the merchants and by the East India Company which pays its servants' salaries in this coin. The right of coining fanams appertains to the king of Cochin as supreme authority in the country: but these monarchs are apt to be defrauded by those whom they appoint to strike the coins, and the metal has been found to be adulterated both in the assay and composition of the metal; consequently the Company have persuaded the king to allow the coinage to take place within the city, reserving to himself the appointment of the Mint masters, and having his own mark stamped upon the coin, but placing all under the supervision of the Dutch Commandant who sends Commissioners to watch the striking, mixing, and assaying of the fanams and to see that they have their due weight and value. There is always a deduction of 4 per cent., two for the king and two for the master of the mint, who pays all the expences incurred in the coinage. These fanams are composed of gold, silver and copper, 10 lb. of the metal being made up of 1 lb. of fine gold of the highest test, 4½ lb. of fine silver, and 4½ lb. of fine Japan copper. This mixture being melted down is then moulded into little balls of the pro-

per weight, and beaten flat with a stamp having certain Malabar characters on either side. The coin is small, and very inconvenient to handle. The East India Company derive a profit from this coinage, as supplying the gold, silver and copper material: but this is not their only gain; for the present Commandant has discovered that the loss which always takes place in the smelting of the mixed metal and from which the old Mint masters made their profit, is not a loss upon the gold and silver, but upon the copper, and has to be made good by the addition of so much copper only.

Finally, I must speak of a kind of money called cowries, used not only in Bengal, but also exported in quantities to the West Indies. These cowries are small shells found on the shores of the Maldive Islands. They are distinguished into the coloured cowries, which are those least prized, and the white cowries, which are used instead of money in the aforesaid countries. The Hindoos in Bengal go about with bags full of cowries to purchase their daily necessaries: and the Europeans make their slaves carry them behind them, and use them on all occasions. From this we perceive that they may be made the means of a profitable trade, and indeed several English private ships visit the islands to buy them. It is a dangerous voyage however, both on account of the adjacent deep and of the climate, which is often fatal to foreigners. The inhabitants are a wretched race, owing to the islands being small and frequently under water, and so barren that they afford scarcely any thing but cocoanuts, which, together with a few fish, are the only sustenance to be procured. The boats of these people come annually to Cochin, bringing cowries for the Company, a few cocoanuts, and some dried fish which look like bits of wood, and are equally hard. In return for these commodities they take rice, the value of each cargo not amounting to more than 300 or 400 Rix dollars. Their boats are strangely fashioned. The bottoms are made of wood, but without nails, being fastened together by wooden bars. A foot above water they are woven of reeds or straw, for I cannot exactly say what it is; and their anchors are pieces of wood: so that how they manage to cross the sea is a marvel. However they only sail in the fine season, when storms never occur.

The natives of the Maldive Islands are blacker than the Malabars, and of a good height. Their religion is the Mahometan. You may imagine the power of their monarch when I tell you that at the annual voyage of his ships he

sends a royal present to the Commandant of Malabar, which is brought with all due ceremony into the city upon a silver salver lent for the occasion, and consists generally of two small mats, worth scarcely two shillings!

Cowries being the principal wealth of these islands, it is worth while to mention how they are collected. The natives take branches of the cocoanut tree on which they fasten stones to make them sink to the bottom. These they leave lying in rows from six to eight feet deep in the sea, round the island. At the end of some days they go out in their canoes, and taking up these branches gently, find their leaves covered on all sides with cowries which they shake off into their boats. They are then thrown into heaps and left to decay, till they are thoroughly dried and purified from animal matter, after which they are polished and either sold to the merchants who come for them, or carried by the natives to Malabar and Ceylon.

Here you have a brief account of the money to be found in India. There are many other kinds besides, current in particular provinces, but those I have mentioned are the most used in commerce, particularly in commerce with Europeans. Having thus fulfilled my promise, I will here conclude, &c.

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# LETTER XIII.

Ecclesiastical and temporal grandees in Malabar—Customary salutations between the higher and lower orders in their daily intercourse; and their modes of shewing respect.

I hope you will not object to my writing you a letter on "miscellaneous topics," tending to a more full acquaintance with the affairs of Malabar. First, I will mention the magnates of this country, who may be distinguished as the Spiritual and the Temporal grandees.

The Malabar Brahmans, or *Namboories* as they are called, in some cases exert secular authority, being the possessors of certain domains, with Nairs or soldiers in their service, and the power of capital punishment over their subjects; being amenable to no superior sovereign or rajah. They have also the patronage of all offices and dignities within their territories, so that in this respect, also, they are independent in the same manner as some of the German bishops, only that their dignity is hereditary, whereas that of the German bishop is electoral.

The *Namboories* are also sometimes lords over certain territories, exercising the right of making war. The four principal Namboories are those of Eincour, Manacaloa, Poenetoer, and Ella Enganare, who are very powerful. The Namboories are neither spiritual nor temporal sovereigns, but may be called half spiritual, half temporal. In order to understand this we must remark that in the old times of Cheramperoumal, when that monarch had reigned twelve years, many people wished to summon a new emperor from Hindostan to fill his place, whilst others were desirous to keep him in power, on account of his sage government. Now, the first party, having introduced their new emperor into the country, some Brahmans of the other side went to meet him, cut off his head, and brought it to Cheramperoumal, who was then at Telepale near Amkoer. In consequence of this deed they lost caste, indeed, but Cheramperoumal to shew

his gratitude made them *Namboories* and gave them the lands of Tellepale for a perpetual possession.

The Caimals are temporal potentates, also, possessing the right of making war. Some of them are subject to the princes in whose territories they are situated; but others are independant: the difference depends on the privileges they received in ancient times. The Malabars say that there are fifty Caimals in the Kingdom of Cochin.

The Rasidoors are lords who have been raised by the Rajahs to certain commands over the army or country. In many places they are appointed to govern a district or town in the name of the prince. Besides these, there is another class, namely, the *Menons*, that is to say scribes, whose office it is to write the letters of their Rajahs and great people with an iron style on the *olas** or leaves of cocoanut trees, to record public affairs, to make out business letters, and also to tie up and seal the Prince's letters, which may not be done by common persons. These Menons rise indeed to higher dignities, sometimes even becoming captains and chiefs of the army, when they acquire the title of *Menon Mare*. The Goeryps (who are the fencing masters) are likewise held in great esteem, some Princes and Rajahs bear this title, as for instance, the Goeryp of Travancore.

And now to another subject. I will here describe the manner in which the lower classes shew respect to the higher, and some other of their customary gestures, in which their manners bear a marked difference from those of the Europeans. While with us a shake of the head is a sign of refusal or denial, with the Malabars on the contrary to incline the head from side to side signifies affirmation and satisfaction. A negative they express by opening and closing the thumb and first two fingers.

No greater affront can be shown to a Malabar than by striking him with the stalk on which a cocoanut grows. A remarkable instance of this occurred not long ago. A Quilon-kara (as the black Christians of Quilon are called), going to the house of a Chego to tap toddy, hard words happened to pass between him and the Chego's mother, and the

"They write on the leaves of wild cocoa trees, out of the breadth of two inches, and two hands long: of these they lay together as many as they think fit, and put a small stick through them on the top, which done they fasten the stick or both ends to the leaves with packthread;—each of these leaves is called *ola*."—From John Nenhoff's Remarkable Voyages and Travels into the best provinces of the West and East Indies.

Quilon-kara, waxing impatient, struck the woman with one of the aforesaid stalks. She related the affront to her son who was not present on the occasion ; and he immediately threatened to take the life of the Quilon-kara. The latter perceiving the imminent danger he was in, fled to Quilon, thinking that the affair would be forgotten in time ; but on his return, after seven months, the Chego discovered and murdered him, and then took flight and escaped punishment.

The modes of salutation differ according to the quality of the parties. When a subject meets a Caimal Ragiadoor or any other grandee belonging to the Court, he lowers his sword placing it with its point to the ground ; or if he has no sword takes off his head dress. Before Rajahs or Princes they must perform a peculiar mode of salutation. They re-cover their heads and joining the palms of their hands raise them to the forehead, then separate them and then open and close their fists thrice before their heads. The Princes must make the same obeisance to the Rajah as first Prince, but they are not obliged to uncover their heads. The petty Rajahs, subordinate to the Rajah of Cochin (those of Mangatti, Porcād, &c.), must thus show their respect to him, and they must remove their upper garment in his presence and remain bare shouldered till he gives them permission to resume it. The Princes of Porcād and Paroer being Brahmans, have alone the privilege of being seated in the presence of the Rajah of Cochin. The former of these, who is superior both in sanctity and rank, may sit on the same couch with the Rajah who takes his hand and places it in his bosom. There is also a high seat prepared for him by the side of the Rajah when he visits him. These visitations are very expensive to the Rajah, who has to provide food for the princes and their retinues, amounting to more than 100 individuals, the whole time they last or to give money in place of food.

The women make the same obeisances as the men, letting fall their veils or coverings, and folding their arms in front. If the Queen mother is older than the Rajah, on his first visit to her after his accession, he must bend his head down to the ground, and lay both his hands joined together on his head, which is the highest mark of respect. If the Queen mother or the eldest Princess of the Royal family is younger than the Rajah, she must perform the same reverence to him.

The ordinary grandees and others salute each other by an

inclination of the head on one side: sometimes the common people fall on one knee before the Rajah, and join their hands over their heads. Others embrace each other with one or both arms. Subjects on their first introduction to the Rajah lay presents at his feet, as a token of respect. The Rajah rewards a grandee or general who has done any special service by the gift of a *somereel*, palanquin [a somereel in the Portuguese language means a sun screen made of the leaves of the cocoa tree or palmyra fastened in a slight wooden frame], or, a gold bracelet or earrings. These gifts, though themselves of little value, are regarded as marks of great honour.

The Rajah of Cochin in some respects ranks higher, and possesses more privileges than the Rajahs of Travancore, Colastri, and the Zamorin. Thus, if these four Princes travelling together, were to approach the house of a Pulleah, the Rajah of Cochin must be the first to enter; and so if they were to bathe together no one must enter the water until he has first set foot in it, after which they must all imitate his proceedings. If a Nair lose caste in any kingdom, no one has power to restore him, except the Rajah of Cochin, who presents him with a *guide* or vessel of water to drink. It is not every one who is privileged to approach equally near to the Rajah. A Chego must keep a distance of 30 paces, a Nair may come nearer but may not touch him; but a Pulleah may never be seen in the place, where he is, while the Brahmans have free access and have the privilege of preparing every thing, even to his food, for him.

When the Zamorin writes to the Rajah of Cochin, or any of the superior Princes to each other, the letter must be addressed not to the Prince, but to the chief Rasidoor, who in Cochin is called the Naicoviti, and the chief Rasidoor of the Zamorin is called the Mangatatja. If a Nair brings a letter from his Rajah to another, or to the Commandant, he must prostrate himself thrice in token of reverence; a Brahman or Pattari is exempt from this ceremony. When the Rajah is employed in religious offices no one may speak to him, not even a Brahman; but if any very important circumstance occurs which demands his attention, he must be informed of it by certain signs on the fingers.

And now having told you so much of manners of the Malabars in their intercouse together, perhaps you will like to hear how they conduct themselves in their dealings with the Europeans. In the time of the Portuguese, there was a

quarrel between their soldiers and the Nairs about the right of way in their casual meetings. The dispute ran so high (according to the Portuguese) that at last it was agreed between the Rajah and the Portuguese General in Chief that it should be settled by a duel between a member of each party, and that the conqueror should win the right for his associates. For this purpose the Rajah selected his most able fencing master, who was well versed in the use of sword and shield. The Portuguese also made choice of the bravest of his army for his champion, but dressed him in common sailor's clothes, so that if he were to lose, the disgrace might not fall on the army: however he prostrated his adversary three times, and the Rajah, unconscious of the deception, was very much surprised that a common sailor should display such dexterity. Since this time, the Nairs have always conceded the right of way to the Europeans, except in one or two instances in my time, when they have disputed that right with our soldiers, who resisted their incivility so valiantly that they have not had courage to repeat it.

When a Rajah visits the town the Commandant receives him at his residence at the foot of the stairs, and leads him up by the right hand. If a Prince come to visit him, he is received on the steps; a caimal or other grandee, the Commandant receives in the hall, where he makes him take a seat. At their first entrance into the town, the Rajahs are conducted from the gate by two members of the political council, with the attendance of armed troops. One member of the council and the chief interpreter perform this office for an inferior prince. They are conducted out of the town in the same manner, the prince walks in the middle, or on the right hand of his conductor. They are also saluted with artillery, the number of discharges being proportioned to their rank. For the Rajah of Cochin, eleven salutes are fired, for the other Rajahs of the kingdom nine, for the petty Rajahs seven, and for other members of the Royal families, five or three.

When the Commandant goes to Court, he is received by the Rajah at the foot of the stairs, unless that Prince is in mourning, in which case the office is performed by the second Prince, or any other who may happen to be at Court. When deputies from the political council go to court, they are accompained by two servants, and may sit down with their heads covered; but the chief interpreter must stand uncovered.

When a new Commandant and Rajah meet for the first

time, presents are exchanged between them; the Commandant presenting gifts prepared by the Company for the purpose, while the Rajah loads him with gold chains and bracelets, and presents are distributed among his suite in proportion to their rank. The Rajahs fasten these bracelets with their own hands on the arms of those to whom they present them, which, as they are rather small, often occasions pain, as I know by experience. Some of the bracelets are plain, others chased. The Company's gifts consist of stuffs, sugar, rosewater, spices, &c. But as the Rajahs generally sell them under their real value, they would be better pleased if money was given them instead, as they deem it no disgrace to receive pecuniary gifts.

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# LETTER XIV.

Customs and luxuries of the women in Malabar. Management of the children, Weddings, &c.

DEAR AND HONOURED MOTHER,

Though it might seem hardly consistent with my respect for you to descend to a minute description of the costume, habits, &c., of the women of this country, yet since you have asked for it, I will devote this letter to satisfying your curiosity.

The people here are of a different colour from those at home, for the natives are either black, brown, or of a light tawny colour, and the Europeans themselves soon lose their beauty and become pallid; a fresh bright colour being never seen, because the delicate veins of the epidermis which give the rozy tint, are here destroyed by the heat of the sun. The women, however, are not deterred from seeking to make up for this loss, by the outward adornment of costly apparel. There is not one of any fortune who does not own as many as twenty or thirty chests full of robes, made of silk or some other valuable material, for it would be a disgrace in their eyes to wear the same dress two or three days in succession. Their necks are adorned with necklaces of diamonds, their ears with ear rings, and their fingers with rings of the same precious stones. Pearls are very common with them, and gold chains are worn by the wives and children of tradesmen and soldiers. Perhaps you will say that this is a shocking luxury, and ask what is the use of all these clothes? but what would you say were they to remind you that many Dutch and Frisian women fill their chests with linen which is never used, but is kept carefully locked up, and never sees day-light except when it is grown so yellow with age that it must needs be washed?

In Cochin the women go generally on foot; but at Batavia, people of even ordinary degree are often carried in

sedans by their slaves, whilst the rich travel in coaches, and these are so common there that my own tailor rode in a calash. When the ladies go out to walk it is generally by moon-light, and they are followed by a troop of slaves, male and female. India is certainly a luxurious country for women: for no sooner does any servant girl arrive from home in Batavia than she becomes a lady, marries a man with money, and is immediately surrounded by slaves who run hither and thither at her command. Even the women who are supported by charitable funds would be ashamed to go out without a slave. All persons of any pretension carry a parasol over the head, to ward off the heat of the sun, and no woman would like to be seen without a slave to hold it. The universal pleasure, both of men and women, is betel chewing; and when the women visit each other, a large silver dish of betel is brought out, with silver boxes and cups, in which the betel leaves are laid, with areca and lime. Cardamums, ketchup, gambier and other condiments are often added to give the mixture a flavour. With persons of any rank, all this service must be of silver, indeed they would be ashamed to place their wine glasses upon any but silver salvers : the glasses are then filled with wine, and handed round to the company by a slave. Perhaps you will object to such pomp and luxury, but custom is second nature, and it is not the possession and use of such things, but their abuse, that signifies anything. None but fools would feel any pride in them; as for myself I am indifferent whether I have them or not.

The native women of European race are all dressed like the Dutch : but the mixed or half white races have a totally different costume. They wear a vest over the upper part of the body, without sleeves and open in front : over this, a jacket of fine linen, descending below the waste, wide in the body ; and tight in the sleeves. Round the lower part of the body they twist cloths of various colours, and fasten them with pins in front. They wear also stockings and slippers, and hang a folded cloth over their shoulders, about a hand breadth in width, hanging down half way back and front. This garment they call a *tokes* : it is frequently made of fine stuff edged with gold. They wear no covering on their heads; and their hair is not plaited, but is done up in a stiff knot ornamented with gold hair pins sometimes set with precious stones. They wear ear rings and finger rings like our women.

I must add a word about the management of the children, which differs in many particulars from the customs of our country. They do not swaddle their infants in the way we do; and indeed the swaddling cloth is never used here, loose wrappers only being used. This custom merits approval, not only because the heat renders swaddling inappropriate to this climate, but because it is in itself a more healthy plan. This is the reason why so few men of dwarfish stature are found in India, whereas they abound in Europe. It is doubtless owing to the same system and the greater coolness and cleanliness it induces, that the infants here know nothing of convulsions, which affect nearly all our children, more or less. They are careful to wash themselves and their children very often; and they laugh at our Dutch and Frieslanders, whose cleanliness is expended on their houses only: but I would venture a wager, that if they could but once feel the cold of our winters, they would not think washing so indispensable.

And now I will say something about their betrothals and marriages. In Batavia, these ceremonies are accompanied with what may truly be called princely pomp and expenditure. So extravagant is the outlay for carriages adorned with ribbons, for thrones, wedding feasts, and other accessories, that many incur ruin in consequence. A wedding which costs only 800 rix dollars besides clothes and ornaments, is considered quite shabby. Here it is even more expensive: so much so, that a wedding among the meaner sort of people would often put to shame, a like ceremony among our grandees at home. At the betrothal, the youthful pair are attended by two couples as witnesses, who march behind the bride and bridegroom in a stately manner. Then follow a young man and maiden bearing the crown, which they place upon the bride's head: and then another couple, carrying herbs, which they scatter over the betrothed pair. A feast is given, accompanied with music: and for the two Sundays after the betrothal, the bride and bridegroom must be visited by all the persons invited. A crown is suspended before the door of the bridegroom to betoken his situation: and in the brides house a throne is set up, over which hangs another crown: and here the young pair are to sit when they are married. On the evening before the wedding, the bridegroom's crown is carried through the streets on the points of two swords, a man carrying a naked sword in front: musicians follow, together with young men bear-

ing torches. When they have finished their procession through the street, they bring the crown to the bride's door, where it hangs till the next day. On Sunday afternoon, the bride and bridegroom accompanied by their young friends proceed to the church, and on the completion of the ceremony, two soldiers, who with others are keeping guard in the church, stand at the door to present them with fire arms adorned with flowers, for which they receive presents in return. Outside the door stand the crown-man and crown-maiden, who fasten a small crown with a pin on the bride's head. They are met on their way home by the herb-man and maiden, who carry baskets of herbs and ornaments made of coloured paper, and strew them before the steps of the advancing pair. Seated on her throne, with a brides-maid on each side, the bride then receives the congratulations of the company. The rest of the night is spent in music, dancing and feasting; and as soon as the bridal dance is over, in which all the company join, the bride is conducted to an elegantly adorned chamber, and the guests depart.

The women marry at a very early period of life, and are to be seen sitting with babies on their knees at an age when in our country they would be playing and running about with children. A girl is considered marriageable when she has attained her 13th year; and then all the suitors begin to flock around her. As she attains woman-hood earlier, so her bloom is proportionably sooner over than in our country.

Such, dear mother, is a description of the women in India. I trust that God will support you, who have given birth to eight children, in your advancing years, I can assure you that my heart is always filled with true affection towards you, and with all tenderness I subscribe myself, &c.

# LETTER XV.

An account of the Topasses, their religious Ceremonies, Priests, and Customs.

There are a certain Christian people to be found in this country of Malabar, and throughout the extensive coasts of India, called Topasses, who cannot be reckoned as belonging exactly either to the Europeans or the natives, but from a third class. They are a mixed race: some are sprung from Portuguese settlers and slaves, whose children have intermarried with blacks: but the greater part are the offspring of enfranchised Portuguese slaves. With these we must also reckon freed slaves of all races; including Christian slaves, who are chiefly of the Romish persuasion. Their number is daily on the increase. These people have a very good opinion of themselves, and if they possess a little money know how to make a fine show with it. They like to class themselves with the Portuguese, whom they call, *our people* (Teur nossa genti), though these, owing to their native pride, despise them even more than we do, always styling them Negroes or Blacks. The Topasses however are no whit discouraged by this treatment and not only give themselves Portuguese names, but are in the habit of choosing those that belong to the noblest Portuguese and Spanish families. They affect very haughty airs, and teach their children always to address them as *"My Lord my father."* (Senhor mei Pai.)

The name Topas is curious. It is supposed to be derived from two Portuguese words, *Tu Pai (thou boy)* because the Portuguese in early times, having taught their language to the slaves born in their house, made use of them as inter-

NOTE.—The East Indian community which is here alluded to has undoubtedly undergone a great change since the days of our Author, consisting of numerous families in all parts of the country most of whom are of high respectability and usefulness. The term Topass has fallen into disuse, but it is singular enough that to the present day, the Europeans in India invariably call 'boy' whenever they require their servant, East Indian or Native. H. D.

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preters in dealing with the natives, and were in the habit of saying "*Tu Pai falla aquel*" or "you boy say so and so." There seems to be a glimpse of truth in this account; for they still call the oldest and most respected slaves "*Pai*."*

Others refer this word to *kocpaj*, which in the Malabar language signifies a coat; for they wear coat, shirt and breaches, like the Europeans, as likewise a hat, in sign of their freedom, and the more wealthy among them wear shoes and stockings, though more generally they go barefoot. Formerly, when the Company first obtained possession of this place, there was a rule that none of the Topasses might wear shoes and stockings, or that at any rate they must pay something to the *Diacony* (or charity fund) for the privilege of so doing. But this rule has fallen into disuse, as has also the tax that was paid for carrying a cane. But in my opinion the origin of this name must not be ascribed to *kocpaj* (coat), but rather to *Toepay* (interpreter); because the race served as interpreters between the people of Malabar and the Christians; and to this day the same office is exercised by many of them, and is esteemed a very honourable profession.

There are a great many of these Topasses to be met with in Malabar, especially on the sea coast, and in the neighbourhood of the European forts and settlements. Several are to be found in the city of Cochin, and its environs where they follow various trades, as bakers, cabinet makers, carpenters, shoemakers and in short all callings which furnish the necessaries of life. In the country they are often agricultural labourers. During the war they were employed by the Company as letter carriers. They are not to be found in our forts, except that of Chetwa where a company of them is stationed, the majority of the garrison however being European. They are more employed by the English who are usually deficient in European hands.

So bigotted are the Topasses to their religion, which is Romish, that it is a work of impossibility to convert them. Their superstition exceeds even that of the Portuguese and

* According to other accounts Tupasi is derived from the Sanscrit word *Duibhashi*. *Dui* signifies two, and *Bhashi* a man who speaks two languages; an interpreter. This name, indeed, may with propriety be given to the Tupasi; for besides their mother tongue, they speak some one of the European languages, either English, French, Dutch or Portuguese. At Cochin they are called *Gens de Chapeau*, because they wear a Topi or small hat; whereas the other Indians, not descended from Europeans, make use of the *Romali*, that is, a white turband of the finest muslin.—BARTOLOMEO.

Spaniards, otherwise the most bigotted of Papists. In accordance with the general custom of their church, they have several brotherhoods, as those of the Rosary, the Conception, &c. On Good Friday they repair in crowds to their churches, and flagellate themselves with scourges made of rope, until the blood runs down. The ends of these scourges are knotted with lumps of wax and bits of broken glass stuck in, to make the strokes more painful. Before applying them, they raise their courage by swallowing huge drafts of Arrack, till they get intoxicated, and in a very unfit state for entering on divine service. St. John the Baptist's Day, June 24th, is an occasion of great hilarity. The little children are then dressed up in garlands and green boughs. On the previous evening, called St. John's eve, they let off grand fireworks in honour of the Saint. (The Dutch at Cochin sometimes indulge in the same display, but they do it merely for a pastime.) On Good Friday, they appoint some one to represent Our Lord, and lead him outside the Church carrying the cross in a sort of dramatic show. When ill, as a means for recovering their health, they make vows to the Holy cross, dressing it with flowers, and burning lamps before it all night. These crosses are set up in the public roads as well as in the Churches. Some of them are held to possess miraculous powers, though since the arrival of the Dutch heretics it is granted that their efficacy has very much diminished. At the beginning of the rainy season in June, a priest goes round to every house, sprinkling it with holy water to keep off evil spirits. They have a hundred other superstitions, not worth mentioning.

Many of their priests are Europeans; but the vicars of their churches are mostly Topasses, and are not admitted to any higher dignity in the church; the Dutch call them parish priests. They are not eligible even to this office unless they possess property to the value of a hundred rix-dollars, for the clerical revenues being insufficient for their support they must help to maintain themselves out of their own funds. They are mostly very illiterate, of Latin they know no more than enables them to perform mass. I was once told by one of them with whom I was conversing about the adoration of the Saints, that he could justify the doctrine by the adoration of the golden calf? This I willingly conceded him. Another coming to visit a church or parish, was asked by the Commandant, who first existed, Christ or the Christians? and in his simplicity made answer, the latter.

But indeed most of the priests ordained at Goa are not much better. One of the Dominican parish priests, a white European, being advanced in years was waited on by one of our visitors of the sick, who, knowing no other language, began to converse with him in Dutch. The priest remarked "I understand the Latin you are speaking very well, but I don't know it quite well enough to make answer in it."

The Topasses have many customs widely different from ours, and which they have probably learnt mostly from the Portuguese. At the birth of a child the women keep on singing to it, or it would be considered unlucky. They have many peculiar marriage customs. The marriage is more commonly arranged by the parents than by the children, and it happens not unfrequently that the bridegroom has never previously seen the bride: within the company's jurisdiction the ceremony of betrothal takes place in the city, and must be conducted before the Committee of matrimonial affairs. The pair do not go thither together, but the bride goes alone, accompanied by an old woman, usually her mother if she is living; next follow several of her nearest male relatives and friends. Then the bridegroom arrives with a party of friends carrying shoes and stockings, and perhaps a sword, if he chooses to pay for it; which money, as also that which is paid for the somereel of the bride, goes to the poor. The appearance of the bride is somewhat strange. She walks generally very lame, being quite unused to the slippers which she now wears for the first time. Besides the tunic and the coloured cloth, in which articles of clothing her dress resembles that of the mixed races *(Mysticen)*, she wears a silken veil, red or green, thrown over her shoulder from behind, and falling in front below the waist. Besides this, the bride is adorned with many gold chains and bracelets. On her head she wears a crown, within the circlet of which her hair is gathered into a knot, and from which several little chains depend. Hair pins set with various coloured stones are set in the plaits of her hair. The marriage ceremony is performed in the Romish church, with a license from the Commandant. When the bridal pair reach the door of their house on their return from church, they are sprinkled with rose-water, and then follows a marriage feast, when the guests eat in good earnest, being generally a hungry set.

When a husband and wife go out together they never walk side by side, as we do, but the husband walks first and

the wife follows. I have observed this custom also sometimes among the Portuguese here. When a Topass dies within the city, his body is laid on a kind of litter covered with a cloth on which a large cross is embroidered, and is then carried out of the city, to be laid in consecrated ground in the island of Vypeen. When Topasses are in mourning they not only wear black coats, but wear them inside out (having no lining to them) and let their beards grow.

They are idle as well as proud, and will seldom work as long as they have any money. Hence there are few wealthy men among them. They are naturally fonder of the Portuguese than of the Dutch, though the former abandoned them shamefully to our mercy when the city changed hands. The unanimity of religion, the resemblance of names, and the notion that they are sprung from the same stock, make these poor creatures cling to their former masters; and I have no doubt that in the event of a war they would side with the Portuguese rather than with us, although at present they are under our protection, and are shielded by the Company against any pretensions on the part of the Heathen, who have no jurisdiction over them, for when they commit crimes, they must be delivered up to the Company and punished according to our law.

This is all that is worth noting about the Topasses; and I hope this description will give you satisfaction.

# LETTER XVI.

Description of the St. Thomas or Syrian Christians—Their Priests—Means of bringing them back to the right way—Their antiquity, and history.

The Christian world in general, and you especially who write Church histories, take great interest in the progress of Christianity among the heathen through the efforts of Gospel preachers: it will therefore be not inappropriate in the present epistle to give you a veracious account of the St. Thomas' Christians,* such as I have been enabled to gather partly from personal enquiry and partly from their own writings, leaving out of sight the narratives of other persons.

To have a clear notion of the people in question, you must understand that all the Christians in Malabar are divisible into three classes: viz., the Europeans, the princi-

* "It is probable that a great part of the Christians of St. Thomas in India came from Persia or Chaldea. The rites, liturgy, ceremonies and books of these Christians, bear evident marks of a Chaldaic or Persian extraction. Though the Malabar dialect is at present the mother tongue of the Christians of St. Thomas in India, they, however, employ Chaldaic phrases when they speak of sacred and religious objects. It is, therefore, not improbable, that a considerable number of Christians went from Persia and Chaldea to India, and united themselves to the small body of the original Indian Christians, whose ancestors were formerly converted to the Christian faith by the Apostle Thomas at Mailapuri, which they unanimously consider as the place that first gave birth to Christianity in India. This much is certain, that all these Christians in the year 1502, at which period Vasco de Gama came a second time to Malabar, were Nestorians. Some of them denied the divinity of Christ, and could not endure images; but, on the other hand, they showed a greater reverence for the holy cross. They had no other Sacraments than Baptism, the Last Supper, and the Consecration of Priests. They believed that the souls of the just were not admitted into the presence of God before the final judgment, and that till that period they were to remain in Eden. In the year 1599, these Christians, by the exertions of Alexis Menezez, Archbishop of Goa, were united to the Catholic Church. As some customs of the oriental Churches, were, however, introduced among them in the Council at Udiamper, and as they by degrees found the arbitrary conduct of the Portuguese insupportable, they raised a violent outcry against them; and in a tumultuary congress, held on the 22nd of May, 1653, at Alangatta, at length formally separated from the Catholic Church."—BARTOLOMEO's East Indies.

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pal of whom are the Portuguese, the English, and the Dutch; the Topasses, who spring from mixed races of whites and Indians; and the native Christians of unmixed race. These last are again divided into the new Christians, consisting mostly of converts from the low castes, made by the Portuguese priests after their arrival in this country, and known by the names of *Cascargas, Mocquas, Quilon Karas, &c.;* and the old Christians, called Christians of St. Thomas, of whom it is my purpose here to speak.* We must first notice their different appellations; for they are sometimes called St. Thomas' Christians, and sometimes Syrian Christians. The former name is derived without doubt from the Apostle St. Thomas, who is said to have preached the Gospel in these parts; a tale, in my opinion, not to be scoffed at, seeing that it is asserted in the tradi-

* The tradition of St. Thomas having preached the gospel in India is thus related by Gibbon (C. 47). "According to the legend of antiquity, the gospel was preached in India by St. Thomas. At the end of the ninth century, his shrine, perhaps in the neighbourhood of Madras, was devoutly visited by the ambassadors of Alfred, and their return with a cargo of pearls and spices rewarded the zeal of the English monarch, who entertained the largest projects of trade and discovery. When the Portuguese first opened the navigation to India, the Christians of St. Thomas had been seated for ages on the Coast of Malabar, and the difference of their character and colour attested the mixture of a foreign race. In arms, in arts, and possibly in virtue, they excelled the natives of Hindoostan: the husbandmen cultivated the palm-tree, the merchants were enriched by the pepper trade, the soldiers preceded the Nairs or nobles of Malabar, and their hereditary privileges were respected by the gratitude or the fear of the king of Cochin and the Zamorin himself. They acknowledged a Gentoo sovereign, but they were governed even in temporal concerns, by the Bishop of Angamala. He still asserted his ancient title of metropolitan of India, but his real jurisdiction was exercised in fourteen hundred Churches, and he was entrusted with the care of two hnndred thousand souls. Their religion would have rendered them the firmest and most cordial allies of the Portuguese, hut the inquisitors soon discerned in the Christians of St. Thomas the unpardonable guilt of heresy and schism. Instead of owning themselves the subjects of the Roman pontiff, the spiritual and temporal monarch of the globe, they adhered, like their ancestors, to the communion of the Nestorian patriarch; and the Bishops whom he ordained at Mosul, traversed the dangers of the sea and land to reach their diocese on the coast of Malabar. In their Syriac liturgy, the names of Theodore and Nestorius were piously commemorated; they united their adoration of the two persons of Christ; the title of Mother of God was offensive to their ear, and they measured with scrupulous avarice the honours of the Virgin Mary, whom the superstition of the Latins had *almost* exalted to the rank of a goddess. When her image was first presented to the disciples of St. Thomas, they indignantly exclaimed, "We are Christians, not idolators!" and their simple devotion was content with the veneration of the cross. Their separation from the western world, had left them in ignorance of the improvements, or corruptions, of a thousand years; and their conformity with the faith and practice of the fifth century, would equally disappoint the prejudices of a papist or a protestant. It was the first care of the ministers of Rome to intercept all correspondence with the

tions of the old Christians both of Malabar and of Coromandel, which agree in indicating a certain spot where he preached. These people are also frequently called Syrians, because for several centuries before the arrival of the Portuguese their Churches have existed under the Government of Syrian Bishops who have been sent out up to the present time; and they make use of the Syriac version of the Bible.

Among these St. Thomas' Christians may be distinguished, on the one hand, those who have remained constant to their first faith, and on the other hand the Apostates, not few in number, who have embraced the doctrines of Rome. The Papists call the first class schismatics, and place them in the same category with the Christians of the Greek Church: but we might with much more justice apply that term to the second class, who have abandoned the faith of their fathers.

The St. Thomas' Christians living along the mountain range, have many Churches there: but of these several were seized by the Roman Catholics in the time of the Portuguese, and in some the service is performed by Syrians and Papists indifferently, not a little to the grief of the former, who are scandalized at the multiplicity of images introduced by their rivals. Of this feeling I was myself a witness at Tekkenkoer, where on my entrance into the sacred edifice, the Bishop then in residence gave vent to his abhorrence of them. They resemble the other inhabitants of Malabar in costume, but wear more clothing. A veil or cloth is often worn above the forehead, wound round the hair. Their dwellings are

Nestorian patriarch, and several of his Bishops expired in the prisons of the holy office. The flock, without a shepherd, was assaulted by the power of the Portuguese, the arts of the Jesuits, and the zeal of Alexis de Menesez, archbishop of Goa, in his personal visitation of the coast of Malabar. The synod of Diamper, at which he presided, consummated the pious work of the reunion, and rigorously imposed the doctrine and discipline of the Roman Church, without forgetting auricular confession, the strongest engine of ecclesiastical torture. The memory of Theodore and Nestorius was condemned, and Malabar was reduced under the dominion of the Pope, of the Primate, and of the Jesuits, who invaded the see of Angamala or Cranganore. Sixty years of servitude and hypocrisy were patiently endured; but as soon as the Portuguese Empire was shaken by the courage and industry of the Dutch, the Nestorians asserted with vigour and effect the religion of their fathers. The Jesuits were incapable of defending the power which they had abused: the arms of forty thousand Christians were pointed against their falling tyrants; and the Indian Archdeacon assumed the character of Bishop, till a fresh supply of episcopal gifts and Syriac missionaries could be obtained from the patriarch of Babylon."

For further information on the subject of the Syrian Christians, see La Chrorz Ceristianisme des Indes, and Geddes's Church History of Malabar. H. D.

separate from those of the other inhabitants, consisting of hamlets or villages in which they live together, the houses being small and mean. It seems that they keep very strict genealogical records, and they will neither marry nor in any way intermingle with the new low caste Christians, being themselves mostly *Castade Nairos*, that is, nobility of the Nair caste, in token of which they generally carry a sword in the hand, as a mark of dignity.

Their priests or teachers mostly wear white linen trousers hanging wide over the knee, and over them an ample robe of white linen or some other material, descending to the knees. On their heads they generally wear a black cap shaped like a sugar loaf. The neck is adorned with a rosary of white coral, and in the hand they carry a painted cane, much longer than our walking sticks. Like the heathen, they generally go barefoot, knowing nothing of shoes and stockings. They are uncultivated and ignorant of the manners of society, being in this respect inferior to the Topass priests who have become accustomed to Europeans, and know something of the acts of courtesy.

Besides their priests, the St. Thomas' Christians have Bishops, who exercise supreme jurisdiction over their churches. At present there are two, Mar Gabriel and Mar Thomas, who do not agree well together, as each of them, especially the latter, claims authority over the other. Mar Gabriel, a white man, and sent hither from Bagdad, is aged and venerable in appearance, and dresses nearly in the same fashion as the Jewish priests of old, wearing a cap fashioned like a turban, and a long white beard. He is courteous and God-fearing, and not at all addicted to extravagant pomp. Round his neck he wears a golden crucifix. He lives with the utmost sobriety, abstaining from all animal food. His house, rather a large one for the habits of the Malabar people, is situated on a hill in the kingdom of Tekkenkoer. He holds the Nestorian doctrine respecting the union of the two natures in our Saviour's person. Mar Thomas, the other Bishop, is a native of Malabar. He is a black man, dull and slow of understanding. He lives in great state; and when he came into the city to visit the Commandant, he was attended by a number of soldiers bearing swords and shields, in imitation of the Princes of Malabar. He wears on his head a silken cowl, embroidered with crosses, in form much resembling that of the Carmelites. He is a weak-minded rhodomontader, and boasted greatly to us of being an Eutychian in

his creed, accusing the rival Bishop of heresy. According to his own account, he has forty-five churches under his own authority; the remainder adhering to Bishop Gabriel. And thus we see that these St. Thomas' christians are divided into two parties: a circumstance of which the Romish priests do not fail to take advantage.

A closer Examination of these people will convince us that they are christians rather in name than in reality. The Priests themselves are stolid and ignorant, most of them unable to read more than certain formularies setting forth their times of prayer and other duties. Nor can any correct account be given at the present day, of their confession of faith, their services being a medley, partly borrowed from the heathens among whom they live, and whose fellow country-men they are; partly from the Papists, to whom very many of them have gone over, and with whom they have several churches in common; and partly from the Greek or Syrian christians, by whose Bishops they are governed, and whose opinions they adopt. I have witnessed their celebration of the Lord's Supper. The consecration was performed in the native language, by a priest before the altar, with a number of ceremonies, in this respect resembling the Romish mass; but in essentials they are orthodox, as they do not allow that the bread is changed with the body of the Lord, and affirm that it is broken only in remembrance of His death. They likewise give the cup to the laity, though their method of distributing the elements differs slightly from ours, the Priest taking the bread and dipping it into the wine, and then placing the pieces in the mouths of the Communicants one after the other. They receive kneeling, with napkins round their necks.

It would not be impracticable to bring over these people into the right way by suitable measures. But this is not a work to be accomplished by a Chaplain whose duties are assigned to the town of Cochin; for these people dwell in the mountains and are rarely seen except when they come in to procure necessaries. A knowledge of the Malabar language, the only one they speak, would also be indispensable, and this language is very difficult, and requires a man's entire devotion to it, having a great abundance of words and letters, of the latter no less than fifty-one. It is moreover divided into three dialects; the Tamil, which is the easiest, and is spoken in Ceylon and Coromandel; the common Malabar, spoken in these parts, and the *Twankerda-*

*mish*, the language of the learned, in which the Brahmins write the mysteries of their religion.

Should the East India Company at any time seriously undertake the conversion of these peoples it would be requisite to send out two or three young students of Divinity, well instructed in the Syriac tongue, to reside among them, having with them interpreters, through whom they might acquire an adequate knowledge of the native language and be enabled to use it in their preaching. There should also be a seminary at Ceylon for the instruction of native youths, and their training as preachers. It need not be supposed that the people would be averse to such a measure; for besides the claim it would give them to the Company's protection, they shew their favorable disposition even now, by offering their children to be educated by us. This I know from my own experience. When I had discussed the principal doctrines of our Faith with the Bishop of whom I spoke before, he was so much pleased that he wished to entrust me on the spot with two youths to be brought up in accordance with those doctrines. Some of these Christians, when they visit Cochin, offer me their customary salutations with every appearance of esteem. Perhaps too, the Company's interests might really be furthered by the course suggested; seeing that these people, besides being numerous, are generally speaking of a martial turn; not to mention that the principal pepper merchants who supply the Company, are to be found among them.

It will not be useless, nor will you take it amiss, if I include in this letter a somewhat remarkable account of the origin and spread of Christianity in Malabar, which has been sent me by Bishop Mar Gabriel, written in the Syriac language. The title runs as follows :—" The antiquity of the Syrian Christians, and Historical events relating to them."

" Fifty-two years after the birth of the Messiah, the holy Apostle Thomas arrived at Maliapore on the coast of Coromandel, preaching the Gospel and founding Churches there. Passing from thence to Malabar, the holy man landed on the island of Maliankarre, (situated between Cranganore and Paroe), preached and taught, and built churches in that island, and likewise at Cottacay, Repolym, Gokkomangalam, Pernetta, and Tiroeusngotta; and having finished his work in these parts and ordained two priests, returned to the land of the Pandies (as the natives of Coromandel are called)

to teach the people there. But whilst he was thus occupied, the Apostle was pierced by the Heathens with spears, and thus ended his life. In the course of a few years all the priests in Hindostan and Malabar, died; and many years afterwards, a *Tovenaar* called Mamukawasser, an enemy to the christian faith, arrived at Maliapore, performing many miracles to hinder its progress. And many of the principal Christians giving heed to him, forsook Christianity and followed this false teacher Mamukawasser. In those days certain persons came from Hindowy or Hindostan, who were not disposed to abandon the people of Malabar, and who allied themselves with the believers, that is, the Christians, who had remained constant, in number about 160 families or tribes. These men taught for many years in Malabar, but there were few among them who had knowledge, because they were destitute of pastors; and therefore most of them ended in becoming heathens, and had all things in common with the other heathens. This caused a second apostacy; so that out of the 160 families, 96 adopted the heathen superstitions, 64 only adhering to the true faith. Now in those days there appeared a vision to an Archpriest, at Oerghai, in consequence whereof certain merchants were sent from Jerusalem by command of the Catholic authorities in the East, to see whether there were here any Nazarenes or Christians. These persons have arrived here with ships, joined all the Christians from Maliankarre, as far as Tierowangotta, treated them as brothers and strengthened them in the faith; and having taken leave of the 64 families, set sail and returned to Jerusalem, and related to the Catholics in that place their adventures in Malabar. After this, several priests, students, and Christian women and children came hither from Bagdad, Nineveh, and Jerusalem, by order of the Catholic Archpriest at Oerghai, arriving in the year of the Messiah 745, in company with the merchant Thomas: and having made acquaintance with the 64 families, they became united and lived in concord one with another. At this time the famous Emperor Cheram Peroumal was reigning over the whole of Malabar. To him the new comers went, and when they informed him of the cause of their arrival, the King was well pleased, and gave them pieces of ground in the territory of Cranganore to build Churches and shops upon, that they might pursue their trades, at the same time he granted the Christians royal marks of honour, and permission to carry on their trade throughout the whole

country so long as the sun and moon should shine, as may be seen to this day in their documents written upon copper plates. In consequence of this, the Christians possess in the territory of Cranganore East, West, North and South, several churches, besides 472 shops and dwelling houses built round them; and they lived in peace and unity for several years. In this period, by order of the Catholic Patriarch of the East, many great teachers arrived in Malabar, from Bagdad, Nineveh, Jerusalem and several other places, who assumed authority over the Christians of the country. This state of things lasted until a separation took place among the Christians of Cranganore, in the year of our Lord 823, and then Mar Saboor, Mar Botoe, and Seboor Isso, came to Quilon as teachers. They went to visit the King Sjak Rawiosti, with presents, and built Churches and shops at Quilon. In these and similar ways, the chief pastors came, teaching and instructing the people of Malabar. In the year 1500, when the Portuguese first appeared in Malabar, where they afterwards obtained a footing, there came, by order of the Catholic Patriarch, four teachers, by name Mar Mardina, Mar Jacob, Mar Thoma, and Jene Allay, who governed the christians and built many churches. After the death of these four teachers, another, called Mar Abraham came to Malabar, about the year 1550, whereupon the Portuguese passed a decree that henceforth no Catholic teachers should come thither, and placed guards everywhere to seize and put to death all who should attempt it. Mar Abraham was captured, but escaped through God's mercy, and continued to teach for many years, and built several churches; after which, he went the way of all flesh. After that time the road was closed to the Syrian priests, and the christians experienced a want of pastors; which the Portuguese perceiving, a Vicegerent and Bishop called Alexio, came to the city of Cochin in the name of, and with authority from the Pope of Rome. This Bishop took a great deal of trouble to bring the Syrian Christians into subjection, and seeing no chance of effecting his object, the Portuguese gave to the King of Cochin 30,000 ducats, and with the help of His Highness persecuted the Christians who dwelt in his dominions, for three whole years. The Christians then, unable to endure the persecution longer, submitted to the Bishop, and thus became reconciled with the Portuguese. Shortly afterwards the Syrian manners and customs underwent a change: the priests were forbidden to

marry; and for about 55 years the Syrians followed the same customs as the Portuguese. In the meantime a priest called Mar Matti came to Maliapore sent by the Catholic Patriarch. The Portuguese apprehended him and brought him into the city, and afterwards dragged him to the harbour and cast him into the water. On hearing this, the Christians of Malabar assembled in the church of Mar Tancheri, took counsel together, bound themselves by oath, and thus threw off the Portuguese yoke from their necks; having first written and signed a letter declaring that from that time forward and for ever, they would have nothing more to do, for good or evil, with the Portuguese. Meanwhile the Portuguese Bishop went to Cranganore, wrote secretly to the Cassanarios and Christians, and sent messengers with presents consisting of fine silk stuffs, gold ornaments and jewels; and those who were allured by these things and also by fair words and promises, went over secretly to that Bishop. The Portuguese and those who belonged to their party, filled the hands of the Prince in whose country the Syrian Christians dwelt, with gifts and materially injured the latter by sundry vexations, confiscations and deeds of violence. And in the days of this persecution, the upright, God-fearing, justice-loving, and peaceable Dutch were sent to Malabar by the inspiration of Almighty God and by order of the East India Company, under the command of the noble Lord Admiral Ryklop van Goens, and like as the heathen were driven out of the land of Isso Biranon Kinan [Canaan?] so have they driven the worse than heathen Portuguese out of Cochin and other cities and fortresses of Malabar; and through Divine Providence the Syrian christians have been from that time forward protected and defended from them, and their pastors have again visited this country without let or hindrance. In the beginning of the year 1700, the Bishop Mar Symons, sent by the Catholic Patriarch of the East, arrived in India, being appointed to Malabar. This man gave notice of his intended arrival by letters to the Syrian Christians, which happening to fall into the hands of the Carmelites and Jesuits, they accordingly placed sentinels everywhere, captured the Bishop, and led him prisoner to Pondicherry where they kept him in irons. After him, in the year 1705, the chief teacher, Mar Gabriel, came to this land; and since that time most of the Syrians have adopted the Church customs of the Portuguese, subjecting themselves to several ceremonies, and condemning

the marriage of the Priests; and that out of the 64 churches, twenty have remained on the side of the Carmelites, and 44 on that of the Syrians: but as we enjoy the favour of the Lord Commandant, we hope that all this will be restored to the old footing, and this is what we now humbly pray of his Excellency and his Council, trusting that they will not turn away their face from us. And therefore we pray God to spare them in good health and all welfare, and to give them blessing and prosperity."

# LETTER XVII.

**Of the Roman Catholic Priests in Malabar, and their Converts among the Heathen.**

The Christians of Malacca, Coromandel, and Malabar, are mostly of the Romish persuasion, with the exception of a small number of our co-religionists, consisting chiefly of Dutch, and their descendants of mixed race. In each of these countries there is but one Reformed minister, while thousands of Romish priests are found along this coast, covering the land like locusts: most of them are very poor, as their Churches here do not possess the incomes they enjoy in Europe, and their congregations are generally indigent. These priests are of two classes, the natives, and the Europeans, of whom the last are most respected.

You may judge of their power in Malabar, when you hear that that country contains one Archbishop and two Bishops. The Archbishop has authority over the Christians in the mountain district, from which he derives his title; his residence is generally at Ambekatti, a few leagues from Cochin. The Present prelate is a Jesuit, a Spaniard by descent, named Antonio Peimentel. Another Jesuit enjoys the title of Bishop of Cochin; he lives at Quilon. These two prelates receive their appointments from the King of Portugal, the Pope confirming them; as we may suppose, they are the craftiest spies of the Portuguese monarch, prying into the affairs of the company, and imbuing the natives with deep aversion to the Dutch. The company has no power to drive them out, not possessing any authority in these countries. We cannot but wonder at the manner in which our former commandants received these priests; they saluted them with a display of arms and firing of cannon, shewing to them the same honours as to kings, thereby grieving all true Protestants, whilst the Romanists were extremely delighted, to see their Bishops so much more

honoured than our chaplains. Any one can see with what purpose this was done, who remembers how selfishness and love of money prevail throughont the world. Another abuse existed under the government of Commandant Ketel, namely, that the Romish priests were allowed not only to visit condemned criminals of their persuasion in Cochin, but even to accompany them to the scaffold. The present commandant Hertenberg, who is a man of noble character, and extremely averse to such proceedings, has done away with these irregularities, and restrains their insolence.

Besides these two Bishops there is another, who styles himself Bishop of Cranganoor, and the surrounding districts; he is a Carmelite, appointed by the Pope alone, and is under the Company's protection; the States General having conceded to the Emperor the right to appoint such a prelate, which right he has handed over to the Pope.

There is no fear lest this Bishop should make common cause with the Portuguese. On the contrary, he has always been their enemy, for the Portuguese king having assumed the right of ecclesiastical patronage, cannot quietly see a Bishop settled here without his consent; so that this prelate and his clergy shun the Portuguese, knowing that they would gladly get rid of them and send them back to Europe. The Portuguese, and the Jesuits combine also to intercept their letters from Europe, as well as the money which is sent them from Rome. In consequence these clergy are always at variance with the Portuguese Bishops, and a wise Commandant with due caution, might through them discover the measures of the Portuguese clergy. The residence of this Bishop and his Priests is at Warapoli, three leagues from Cochin, where they have a convent and a neat church.

There is no likelihood of their making many adherents, for their poverty causes them to be held in small esteem by the native princes; whilst the Jesuits, on the contrary, are rich, and astute in all their proceedings, and have consequently acquired great influence over that venal race.

From this description you will understand the present state of Christianity in Malabar, where superstition reigns supreme, and no human means can be devised to spread the Reformed faith among the native Papists: partly, because they are stupid and incapable of understanding any reasoning; and partly, because the Romish Missionaries have roused in them a mortal hatred against our religion, which they carry to such an extent, that they will not dignify us with the name of

Christians, always meaning a Roman Catholic when they speak of a "Christiano." They invented a thousand calumnies against us, such as, that we deny the Divinity of Christ, &c., and tell all manner of fictions to mislead the ignorant people. Thus a certain Portuguese General, van Timor, who was at Batavia, had the effrontery to assert that he had seen there one of the greatest miracles in the world for the conversion of heretics; namely how a stone cross grew on a bench outside a certain house in the Roemalakken, and as often as it was cut down, sprung up again of itself; now it is certain that this is as great a lie as can be, for I, and thousands besides, have walked through that street every day, without seeing anything of the kind. In the same way, I was asked by a Lutheran merchant of Hamburgh, who had come from Portugal to Goa, and thence to Telicherry, whether there was here a miraculous arch, for he had been told as a certain truth, that there was such a Portuguese building, which the Commandant had sent several men to destroy without success, and had at length placed guns before it to shatter it, but it still remained standing; and when I made a face at the story, he answered that it was believed by the most intelligent people in the place.

You will wish perhaps to know the further reason why the Romish religion is spread so widely over the coast of India, while our reformed faith has struck such small roots there.

First, you must observe, what I have mentioned before, the great number of Romish Priests in this country, both those who have been brought up here, and those who come from other places, especially Goa, which may be called the mother and seminary of the Romish priests in India. Half the population indeed of that city consists of clergy, who are much more numerous there than soldiers, and are not only sent from Europe in ships each containing 40 or 50 of various orders, but are also ordained at Goa itself in great numbers; and as it is impossible for them all to obtain a livelihood there, they spread themselves throughout the whole country. In the islands, on the contrary, where the East India Company are masters of the seacoast, few or no Roman Catholics are found; and the Company have there several chaplains and seminaries, for the instruction of youth, which do not exist in these parts.

Secondly, we must take into consideration, that the Romish worship is much more attractive to those who are converted from heathenism, than the reformed; for where

the latter commands men to worship God in spirit and in truth, the former has rites and ceremonies resembling those of the heathens. They both worship images, though those of the papists are beautiful, and those of the heathens frightful and monstrous; both have their saints or minor deities, both have lights in their churches, both make vows to their images, and adorn them with flowers; and this great similarity, no doubt makes the transition to the Romish persuasion easy to these people.

In the third place we must add, that except the St. Thomas' Christians, all those who are converted by the Roman Catholics are either the slave children of christians, like most of the Topasses, or of the lowest sort of heathens, none being higher than Chegos. Few brahmins, chetriahs, or sudras adopt their religion; indeed, we might suppose that the low castes do so generally in order to escape the contempt in which they are held by their nation, for when they become Christians they are more esteemed, and may even come to the palaces, which they might never approach before. There are also many among these new christians, who come over to that religion, because they have lost caste, and are dishonoured among their own people; a class of persons who would not be lightly received among us. The priests also make very little circumstance about the baptism of these new christians, for they merely ask whether they believe in Christ or in the Holy Church, or can say the Apostles' creed, and then baptize them at once; and as the people know well enough that we should not act in that manner, but should ask them their reasons for wishing to become Christians, and teach them diligently, they do not come to us. Besides, seeing that the great mass of blacks are papists they follow their example, thinking blindly that to possess the mere name of christian is enough. We may add another reason: namely, that the Romanists baptize slaves and the children of slaves, thus making them nominal christians; whilst among us baptism is only administered to those whose parents are christians.

# LETTER XVIII.

Of the Jews, Black and White.

One of your letters, dated from Harlinger, has at length reached me. It seems that place is more favoured than Westkappel, for the letters you sent from thence have never come to hand. Perhaps they were sent by sailors who found no opportunity to deliver them safely, so that they were passed on from one ship to another without ever entering the bay, or perhaps the letters have been thrown into the great bag at Penang or elsewhere, where, after being kept a year unclaimed, they would be burnt.

Jews are found here, and in many other places on the vast coast of India, as they are almost all over the world. They are not, however, to be met with in the neighbouring islands, nor at Java, Sumatra, Celebes, Amboyna, Banda, or Ceylon. A colony of them is domiciled on this coast, who, according to their own account, came here after the destruction of the second temple, which is the era from which they date: thus this present year (1723), is with them the year 1657.*

Since this period about a thousand Jews, men, women, and children, have settled in Malabar, fixing their abodes at Cannanore, Nagorne, Malai, and Porivarem. For some centuries they were unfortunate enough; but their situation improved in the reign of Cheramperoumal, that monarch having granted them certain privileges, which were inscribed on copper, and are still preserved. I have seen a

* The Colony of white Jews residing apart in the midst of the native population is a very remarkable fact. Their number at present is about 300. They are very poor. According to their own statement, their ancestors were refugees from Palestine A. D. 68; when 10,000 Jewish families came and settled on the coast of Malabar, and dispersed themselves in various parts of the country. In all probability this number has been greatly exaggerated; and one thousand would be nearer the mark. A full account of the Syrians and Jews will be found in the "Christian Researches" of Claudius Buchanan, who made many successful discoveries in Cochin, of Syriac and Hebrew M. S. S. of the Pentateuch and other parts of the Scriptures, now preserved in the University Library at Cambridge. See also, Wilson's Lands of the Bible.—H. D.

copy of them; they consist of certain frivolous grants, such as permission to use trumpets and drums, sedans, and similar trifles, which are much thought of in this country. He also placed over them a Jew named Joseph Rabban, who as well as his successors received the title of Chiramand Mappela: *i. e.*, the merchant whose office it is to furnish the Emperor's lamps with wicks, which must be regarded as a tribute paid to the monarch in acknowledgment for the dignity. The word *Mappela* does not express any supreme or independent authority.

I have been told, but I will not vouch for the truth of the story, that these merchants wished to purchase with a large sum of money, from one of the princes of Malabar, the entire supremacy over their own nation; and that the bargain was nearly completed, when the monarch hearing from other quarters that the Jews had no large independent possessions in any part of the world, refused their demand. These white Jews made several black proselytes, and in process of time, a great division took place between them, and they spread out in different directions. A party of the white Jews came to a place called by the Portuguese *Sinhora Savodé*, about half a league distant from the town of Cochin, where they maintained themselves for fifty years; but being unable to endure any longer the offensive vicinity of the Moors, and still more of the Christians, who keep unclean animals in their houses, they obtained from the Rajah of Cochin a piece of ground near his palace, on which to build their houses. Here they have dwelt now for 202 years, but the place being small, their houses are poor and huddled together; they are chiefly built of stone, and covered with tiles.

At the present time they have a Jewish chief, appointed by the Rajah of Cochin with the title of Modeliar who bears as a sign of his dignity, a wand with a silver knob; a kind of staff which both the Rajah and the Company give to any one whom they wish to honour, or who is appointed to certain offices, such as that of merchant to the Company. The Modeliar has power to enforce some punishments, and to impose and remit fines, subject to the Rajah's judgment; but great and capital causes are tried by the Rajah himself. The Company has however some jurisdiction over them.

I have enquired of the principal persons among these Jews the reason why they have kept so few records of the history of their nation here. Their answer has been that

their records had been torn from them by the Portuguese in the year 1662, when that people devastated their synagogue, and deprived them of their privileges, because they had supplied the Dutch with provisions during their unsuccessful siege of the city.

The Black and White Jews inhabit the same district, the latter occupying the banks of the river. The white are much richer and more powerful than the black, who are mostly of slave race, and amount, I have been told, to 2,000 souls in Malabar. The number of white Jews who have of late come here from Europe, Bagdad, and Cairo, is small; but there are some also who have been settled here for many centuries. They try as much as possible to prevent inter-marriages with the black Jews, although these sometimes take place. The two races possess also separate synagogues; and the blacks have a dark coloured Rabbi, who must stand back if a white one enters, and must resign to him the honour of performing divine service in the synagogue. On the other hand, when the black Rabbis enter the synagogue of the whites, which is a very superior one, they must only be hearers. There has been lately a great dispute between the two races: the black wishing to compel the white Jewesses to keep their heads uncovered, like their own women, and trying to persuade the Rajah to enforce such a rule. The dispute ended, however, with permission given to every one, both men and women, to wear what they chose.

The Jews make no objection to selling their slaves who are not of their own religion to other nations, obliging them, however, when sold, to abandon the use of the Jewish cap, which they had before worn on their heads. But slaves, male or female, once fully admitted into their religion by the performance of the customary rites, can never be sold to a stranger. The black Jews trade chiefly in poultry, eggs and butter; but the whites, who trade with the Company, sell more valuable commodities.

Thus, my brother, you see the Divine prophecies confirmed in the far East, where the curse upon this stiff-necked people is heavy upon them, as it is in Europe, and the veil is still before their face; while they look in vain for a Messiah, and now begin to despair of their expectation, for there are some here who venture to say that possibly the Messiah for whom Israel has been longing for so many centuries, was never promised at all.

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And now, my worthy brother, I long sorely to see you and our dear parents once more. Oh, when will that day arrive! perhaps never. My desires to revisit my beloved fatherland are ceaseless, and all the enjoyments I have here cannot satisfy them. Others may say, our country is wherever we are well off; but the force of nature goes beyond all that. It would seem as though our frames have a perpetual attraction to the land where we first drew breath, and that being formed of the very dust which is found there, they seek it as their own element, and are mysteriously thus drawn to it. You will say perhaps that in some respects this ardent wish of mine is unreasonable, as I have here every requisite for temporal comfort. It would be ingratitude to deny it. Yet, my brother, our happiness does not depend on these things, as is sometimes imagined. It is true I find my house filled with slaves, my table loaded with delicacies; but I am not the happier for it, for the multitude of slaves breaks the head, and twenty do not now serve me so well as six or seven did formerly. And why? because they put their work off upon each other's shoulders, and those who are sent to put things straight only make matters worse. Can you expect anything else from savages? and yet, oh foolish vanity! the law of fashion forces us to submit to all this. Our food, delicately dressed in various ways, is generally insipid, and a dish from our old fatherland would be considered a banquet here. And how can any kind of food help us, when appetite, its only sauce, is wanting, as is the case with me and with thousands besides, for the heat of the sun and the climate is such that we seldom know the feeling of hunger. But of all these grievances I think but little, compared to that of the absence of my dear parents. You know that love despises everything but its object. Meantime may every Divine blessing attend you.

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# LETTER XIX.

Account of the Moors in Malabar.

As the population of Malabar, includes members of various religions, we are not surprised to find among them a race of Moors, who profess the faith of Mahomet. They deserve our attention the more, that they were the chief foes the Portuguese had to contend with on their first landing on these coasts, for as commerce had hitherto remained solely in their hands, they disputed any share in it being usurped by the new comers. They, being like the St. Thomas' Christians, born in this land, might be in one sense regarded as natives of Malabar, but as they have mingled with other members of their faith, Moguls, Turks and Arabs, who resort to the country for purposes of trade, they form in some sort a distinct people.

Like the Portuguese here, their disposition is naturally inclined to cruelty and malice. In costume they resemble the natives, the beard, which they alone wear, forming their distinguishing mark, and they also usually carry some weapon, sword or cutlass. There are but few wealthy merchants among the Moors in the neighbourhood of Cochin, who are for the most part in small circumstances; their dwellings, which lie on the banks of the river, beyond the Jews' locality, are built of stone, and are mostly small and mean. The people are held altogether in small estimation here, and are but little employed in the commercial transactions of the East India Company.

On the other hand, they are very influential at Calicut, and indeed are almost the masters of the place. The chief merchant there is always attended by a large suite of his compatriots, who are armed with sword and shield, in imitation of the pomp and parade of the native princes. The East India Company make every year an agreement with him for turmeric, of which he usually furnishes 100 kandies to the Commissioners there.

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The most powerful of all the Moors, who may be regarded almost as an independent prince, resides at Cannanore. He is entitled Ali Rajah, king of the islands, being the lawful sovereign of all the Laccadives which were ceded to him by Colastri. Being descended from the ancient house of Colastri, he is indeed a scion of the royal family, but having embraced Mahometanism, he forfeited his right of succession to the kingdom in Malabar. But he has sufficient territories in his possession, among which the Laccadives are the most considerable; and as a testimony of the above-mentioned cession to these islands a new Ali Rajah must always receive his crown from the reigning Rajah of Colastri. His Turkish or Moorish appellation is, Mahomet Ali Caauw. Although he has embraced the Mussulman faith, the Malabar laws of succession hold good in his domains, the sister's son being his rightful successor.

Ali Rajah has a large and handsome bazaar, where most of the Moors in his dominions reside. This bazaar extends on one side nearly to the bay, and on the other is within reach of the Company's fort and cannon. It is itself sufficiently fortified with walls and artillery to enable it to resist the attacks of the heathens. The Moorish Rajah carries on a considerable traffic with Mocha, Persia, Surat and other places, and owns several vessels. The East India Company trade with him at Cannanore, in cardamum and turmeric. They indeed derived considerable benefit from his friendship on their first settlement in Malabar, when they were at war with the Portuguese; and a treaty for mutual protection was entered into between them. Last year, (1722), a great quarrel arose between Ali Rajah and the people of Colastri, which ended in open war. It originated in some private dispute; a party of Moors slew some Nairs, and the latter in revenge killed as many Moors as they could lay hands on. At length the Moors, hearing that a prince of the house of Colastri was about to pass the bazaar on his journey to the Court of the Zamorin, intercepted him, put his retinue to rout, and inflicted disgrace on him by publicly flogging him in the bazaar. An insult so gross offered to one of their own race so enraged the Rajahs that they laid siege to the bazaar, and several conflicts took place; the English always supporting the party of Colastri, and furnishing them with all necessaries of war, on condition, it is said, that if the bazaar was conquered and the Moors expelled, the English should have a factory there. Our Company remained neutral, only per-

mitting the Moors to purchase ammunition, &c., in the city. The siege lasted a long time within sight of the fort of Cannanore, which retained its neutrality, merely warning the belligerents not to carry on their combats within reach of its artillery. But when the Malabars, finding their attempts on the opposite side fruitless, proceeded to assault the bazaar in a quarter where they were within range of the fort, our garrison finding their warnings disregarded, fired a volly among them, which destroyed numbers, and obliged the rest to beat a hasty retreat. After this occurrence the siege proceeded slowly, till at length the parties concluded a treaty, (through the mediation it is said of the English governor of Calicut, Mr. Adams), which was highly disadvantageous to the Moors; they being compelled to pay a large sum of money to Colastri for the expenses of the war, leaving some gardens in pledge till this was done, and also to permit him to retain a fortified village on the further side, the guns of which would command the bazaar.

The Portuguese and Moors nourish a rooted hatred towards each other, which commenced at the first arrival of the former in India, and still endures. It is perceptible even when they are at peace. In the year 1720 the Portuguese, meeting a ship belonging to Ali Rajah which was conveying money and horses from Mocha, attacked it, under the pretext that no one had the right of transporting horses but themselves; and although the vessel had a Dutch passport, they captured it and brought it into the harbour of Cochin. On hearing this, Ali Rajah despatched twenty well manned vessels to pursue the Portuguese, who were discovered in the harbour with the captured ship. The Portuguese commander, or *Capitano di Marre Guerre*, overcome with terror, fell at the feet of the Dutch Commandant and implored his protection. The latter, moved to compassion by his deep humiliation, charged the Moors to refrain from hostilities in the harbour, and it was mutually agreed that an officer should be appointed by each party to report the event to their superiors, and that in the meantime no hostilities should take place. Shortly after this, a Portuguese named Alba Bordo entered the roadstead, without any salute, and in spite of this compact treacherously stole off with the captured vessel, taking the mate with him.

This treachery against all human laws so incensed the Commandant that he detained two Portuguese Captains who

were on land, and not prepared for a sudden flight; and then sent word to the Viceroy, who was compelled to restore the ship and her merchandize in order to obtain his officers' liberty.

Another event happened at Tanoor last year, which arose from the following cause :—A certain Moor had invited some Danes to trade with him; the Portuguese Resident not approving of this, strengthened with a troop of Nairs, expelled the Danes, and caused the Moor who had called them in, to be bound to a stake and beaten. This so enraged the Moors that they resolved to take violent revenge. The Resident Bibero happening to die soon after, the Viceroy appointed in his place his son-in-law Felisco dos Santos. The offended Moors took an opportunity one day when the new Resident had gone out for a walk to enter his house secretly, and to maltreat his two children in such a manner that they died within two days. Having made a complaint of this at Goa, a ship of war was despatched to his assistance in the beginning of January, conveying troops, who after landing put all the Moors they met to death, and proceeded to plunder and burn their houses. The Moors were obliged for the time to submit; but as soon as the Portuguese had departed they vented their fury on the native Christians, laid waste their houses and gardens, pulled down their church, and even compelled a slave belonging to the Resident to adopt their religion, which was an infraction of the treaty. Meantime the Resident and his wife retired to Cochin. The Zamorin however offers reparation and satisfaction, which will perhaps appease the quarrel.

The extension of the Mahometan doctrines on this coast took place in early times, if we are to believe certain Malabar records in the Arabic language. According to them, some emissaries came here so far back as the reign of Cheramperoumal, when Mahomet was in his 57th year; and so entirely persuaded the Emperor of the Divine mission of their Prophet, that he resolved to go in person to visit him. Cheramperoumal died, however, on his journey, but not till he had taken care by letters which he addressed before his death to the Rajahs of Malabar, that all freedom should be allowed the Mahometan teachers to propagate their religion, make disciples and build temples through the whole country. This they did with equal zeal and success; so that within a few years their false creed had struck deep root here. The narration I have followed is however filled with trifles, and does not hang well together, so I will not detain you longer with it.

# LETTER XX.

Of the Nairs (Sudras), or warrior caste of Malabar. Their families, occupations, mode of warfare, and numbers.

This letter shall be devoted to a minute account of the Nairs or warriors of Malabar, who attained much celebrity during the wars between the Zamorin and the Portuguese. They may be justly entitled born soldiers, as by virtue of their descent they must always bear arms. They constitute the third and last of the honoured castes under the name of Sudras.

Their ceremonies and observances coincide in a great measure with those of Chetriahs : like these they are allowed no lawful wives, and the children always belong to the mother's family. Another point of resemblance between these castes is that their corpses are always burnt, a privilege which belongs exclusively to the higher castes; the members of the inferior ones alone are interred. The ceremonies observed on the birth of a child resemble also in many points those of the Chetriahs. At the age of 12 years a Sudra child begins to learn the laws of his caste, and when he has attained his 16th he first takes up arms.*

The Sudras may be divided into two classes: the nobles and the commons. The following are the noble families—Nambedi, Nambiar, Samandra, Patitsjan, or Belerte Nairs, Bellalen or Bellares, Wellekoc, Tallenairs (who are barbers

* In Johnson's "Relations of the Famous Kingdoms in the World" (4to, 1611), the author thus records of the Nairs. "They inhabit no towns, but dwell in houses made of earth environed with hedges and woods, and their ways as intricate as into a labyrinth. It is strange to see how ready the soldier of this country is at his weapons : they are all gentlemen and termed Nairs. At seven years of age they are put to school to learn the use of their weapons, where, to make them nimble and active, their sinews and joints are stretched by skilful fellows, and anointed with the oil Sesamus : by this anointing they become so light and nimble that they will wind and turn their bodies as if they had no bones, casting them forward, backward, high and low even to the astonishment of the beholders. Their continual delight is in their weapons, persuading themselves that no nation goeth beyond them in skill and dexterity."

and much esteemed, as they were privileged by Saneratojaar to assist the Brahmins at funeral ceremonies), Vellala Sudren, and Sudren. These all subsist on the produce of their own estates and carry on no trade, with the exception of bartering among each other.

Some of them are lords of their own territories, possessing royal power, but most of them merely hold their estates in fief from their prince, whom they are bound to serve in war, and to protect his dominions, for which service they receive no pay, but are maintained when employed out of the country. They generally own Pulleahs, whom they have inherited with their property, and who cultivate the soil.

There are also several Nairs who are employed in constant attendance upon their Rajahs, whose retinue they form. These receive daily pay, more or less at the Rajah's pleasure; it is well if they get as much as 3 stivers a day a piece.

Rasidoors, Governors of towns and provinces, and high Military officers are chosen from this class of Sudras, as they are superior in dignity to the second class.

These inferior Sudras are also Nairs or soldiers, bound to accompany the Rajah at his behest in war; but in time of peace they maintain themselves by certain handicrafts and trades, to which they are called by their birth respectively. Thus there are the

| | |
|---|---|
| Sakkiara.......................... | Musicians in the Pagodas and at Court. |
| Poodewallen........................ | Who have the honour of handing betel to the Rajah. |
| Andoekellan........................ | Makers of pots and pans. |
| Tzomboe Kotty...................... | Bargain makers. |
| Toonen............................. | Tailors. |
| Noelchottin........................ | Cloth weavers. |
| Wilsiatte Nairs.................... | Oilmakers. |
| Jodacheri.......................... | Ploughers. |
| Wallamneoers....................... | Fishermen. |
| Ajari.............................. | Carpenters. |
| Moesjari........................... | Tinkers. |
| Tataan............................. | Silversmiths. |
| Kollen............................. | Blacksmiths. |

The armies of Malabar are formed of these Sudras. They are expert in the use of arms, and set at nought the lower castes, who being unarmed are unable to protect themselves

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against their violence. The Pulleahs do not venture to approach them, and get out of their way to escape blows or perhaps wounds; for these heroes always carry a naked sword when they are abroad, and even in their houses they must have one at hand as a token of their dignity and office: these weapons vary in form; they are generally straight with both edges sharp. They sometimes have a small weapon called a *Katjanel* besides, which is fastened to the shoulder by a ribbon.

The weapons used in war are various. The most common are swords with which they can do considerable execution, and large round shields made of leather prepared with many colours, resembling the ancient clypei. Sometimes the shields are covered with tiger skins, they are very light and the Nairs are adroit in the use of them. Some are armed with bows and arrows; these are chiefly inhabitants of the mountains. They have also pikemen; their pikes are very small and light, and they are quick in hurling them. They are all foot soldiers; knowing nothing of horsemanship. I have never seen a Malabar on horseback; not even do their princes possess steeds, and indeed they would be of no use in the low flat lands, where the ground is much broken and very marshy, and intersected with streams: and besides this, there are no beaten roads, the whole country being covered with bushes and underwood. It often happens that our troops are obliged to march in single file, and if the natives at such times were wise and active enough they might easily annihilate our regiments by opposing their progress.

Moreover there are few or no horses found here. There are a few of a puny species unfit for riding at Tengepatnam. The wealthy Moors import them from Arabia, and these animals fetch a high price.

The Rajahs keep elephants, which are captured in the mountains and are of immense size, but they are only used for hard work, and in war for transporting baggage.

They have musketeers also among their troops, and they have a good notion of making the barrels of their muskets, which they do not bore, but cast. With these muskets they can reach nearly as far as we do with ours; but they are very heavy and their weight is increased by the ramrod being of iron. They take a very sure aim, and the first shot generally hits and often inflicts great mischief, for the wounds are inflicted by the grapeshot of various shapes which

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they use instead of round bullets are very painful. Their muskets have one great fault, that it takes a long time to load them, so that European foes, when they have stood the first fire can fall upon them while they are reloading. Besides this, they can never let off more than three volleys in succession, because when firing they place one of the finger nails between the eye and the nose, and by the time the third shot is discharged, all the skin is scratched off that part of the face. Like other barbarous nations they possess but little military science. They do not know how to form ranks, and pay little heed to the commands of their officers. They fight in a confused manner without any order or concert, for which reason they cannot be incorporated into our regiments like the other Indian soldiers, but must form a separate Corps. We beheld in the late war, how much they were terrified by the pikemen of Balise and Java, who led by Europeans made such a furious onslaught upon these Nairs that they were thrown into the utmost confusion. They have another fatal custom, which has cost many lives; Every body slain in battle must immediately be taken away to be burnt, which creates great confusion, and the survivors lose heart at the sight of their comrades thus carried dead off the field.

Again they are ignorant of the science of beleaguering strongholds, and they have no materials for cannonading, bombs, grenades, and other instruments of war being unknown to them: therefore we have not much to fear from them in this respect, if our forts are but tolerably well protected. We have seen how Anjengo held out against them when almost entirely bereft of garrison. They are better at defending a fort or fortified village, constructed in their own fashion, than at open fight in the field: for, when behind the shelter of their walls they can fire away at their ease through the gunholes, and we are obliged to keep out of range of their firelocks; but, after all, there is not much to fear from them, as they know so little how to handle them. The Rajahs endeavour to entice our men to act as officers for them, imagining that every European is well versed in military matters, though, may be, he has never seen a cannon fired.

I think it the wisest way in attacking their forts and paggers to make use of bombs, grenades, and combustibles, both because these missiles strike terror into them and because their fortified villages, being constructed gene-

rally of combustible matters, (for the houses are built of dry palmyra leaves,) speedily catch fire and are consumed.

The wars which the Rajahs wage among themselves are not productive of much bloodshed. A battle in which 20 lives were lost would be considered a very serious affair. The deaths in the course of a whole war often do not amount to that number, therefore these hostilities excite but little of our attention, though sometimes three or four Rajahs combine together against others. The principal mischief they cause is by hindering the transport of supplies, and very often the whole country is devastated and laid waste, the cattle driven away, and the miserable subjects sorely oppressed. There are sufficient reasons to account for this species of warfare, they possess no walled towns and very few fortified villages; but all their places are unprotected and open and their territories contiguous to each other, so that the injured party being the weakest in one quarter may be able to inflict reprisal on the aggressor by invading his domains in another.

The death of a Rajah or grandee in war tends to improve the condition of his party: for the enemy who has been the cause of his death must immediately quit the field, and pay a fine either in goods or lands to the family of the slain prince. Thus the Rajah of Mangatti once killed three Paroese princes and was therefore obliged to resign a considerable piece of land. This law is of service in protecting the lives of these princes.

And now let us consider the numbers of these Nairs. According to Malabar calculation there are 3,000,000 of them in this country; but this is incredible, for although many places are highly populated, we cannot believe that so small a track of land can contain so many hundred thousand, taking into consideration besides the numbers of the other castes. But the Malabar Rajahs, like other Oriental monarchs, are fond of exaggerating their importance, and they boast of the number of Nairs and soldiers they have in their country and service, to impress us with the idea of their wealth and power.

# LETTER XXI.

Account of the Chegos, and other low castes of Malabar.

The lower orders of Malabar are divided into several castes, differing considerably in rank and dignity. We will first notice the Chegos, who came in very ancient times to this country, of which they may be reckoned, on account of their long habitation and similarity of religion, as natives. The tradition is that they came originally from Ceylon, where they belonged to the military caste, in consequence of the following circumstance. In the time of Cheramperoumal, a woman belonging to the caste of the washermen, whose house adjoined that of an Ajari (the carpenter caste), being occupied as usual in washing a cloth in water mixed with ashes (which is here used for soap), and having no one at hand to hold the other end of it, called to a young daughter of the Ajari, who was alone in the house, to assist her. The child, not knowing that this was an infringement of the laws of her caste, did as she was requested, and then went home. The washerwoman was emboldened by this affair to enter the Ajari's house a few days afterwards; and upon the latter demanding angrily how she dared to cross his threshhold, the woman answered scornfully that he belonged now to the same caste as she did, since his daughter had helped to hold her cloth. The Ajari, learning the disgrace that had befallen him, killed the washerwoman. Upon this, her friends complained to Cheramperoumal, who espoused their cause and threatened the carpenters; whereupon the latter combined together to take refuge in Ceylon, where they were favourably received by the king of Candy, for whom the Malabars have great veneration. Cheramperoumal was placed in great embarrassment by their departure, having no one in his dominions who could build a house or make a spoon, and begged the king of Candy to send them back, promising to do them no injury. The Ajaris would not place entire confidence in these promises, but asked the

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king to send with them two Chegos and their wives, to witness Cheramperoumal's conduct towards them, and to protect them. The king granted their request, with the stipulation that on all high occasions, such as weddings and deaths and other ceremonies, the Ajaris should bestow three measures of rice on each of these Chegos and their descendants, as a tribute for this protection; a custom which still exists. If the Ajari is too poor to afford the outlay, he is still obliged to present the requisite quantity of rice, which is then given back to him again; the privilege of the Chegos being thus maintained. From these two couples all the Chegos of Malabar are said to be descended.

This caste comes next below that of the Sudras, but is considered much less honourable. In times of civil war or rebellion, the Chegos are bound to take up arms for the lawful sovereign; and some princes employ them as soldiers on other occasions, if they have not a sufficient force of Nairs. Their principal occupation is that of drawing *toddy*, which is compulsory on their caste; this operation, as you know, is performed by cutting off the top of the cocoa-palm, and collecting in vessels the juice which exudes from it. The Chegos are sub-divided into two castes: the Chegos and the Twen Chegos.

Next to the Chegos are the *Coelagoeryp*, who make bows, arrows, shields and other weapons of war, and the *Canniargoeryp*, whose vocation is to teach the art of fencing and the use of weapons; with these we must reckon the *Coetady* or trumpeters.

After these castes follow others still lower in rank, consisting of: 1st, the *Cannianol*, who are astrologers; 2nd, the *Corwaas*, or exorcisers of evil spirit; 3rd, the *Cuca Corwaas*, snake charmers and diviners; and 4th, the *Poenen Poeloon*, who accompany them with tambourines or small drums. These four castes are in some measure distinct, but resemble each other in their strict separation from other castes in their unsettled mode of life, wandering from place to abode and earning their livelihood by exorcisms, jugglery, snake-charming, &c., like the heathens in Europe: and in their independence, for they manage their own law suits, punish their own criminals, and are subject to no Prince or Rajah.

Another caste are the *Mocquaas*, who inhabit the seashores and subsist by fishing. We cannot wonder that many of them have become Romish Christians, as the Europeans have so much influence in those parts of the country.

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The slave castes, the members of which belong to individual masters, are: 1st, the *Cannekaas,* who gather the cocoanuts; and 2nd, the *Bettoas,* who make saltpans and collect the salt: these two are the most honourable of the slave castes.

Then follow the Pulleahs, who are again subdivided into several classes: the *Collamary* or smiths; the *Weltoe Carens,* the *Beltoe Pulleahs,* and the *Canna Pulleahs,* whose occupation is agriculture, sowing, planting and cutting the Nely, for which they receive, both from their proprietors and from strangers, one sheaf out of every ten they cut. There is a dispute between the Cannekaas and the Pulleahs as to which is the higher caste, for there is room even among these miserable creatures for pride; the first maintaining that their caste ranks first, whilst the Pulleahs aver that they enjoy more privileges, as for instance that they may employ barbers, and may wear a fillet on their heads and a long garment reaching to the knees, which the Cannekaas may not do.

The Pariahs are divided into two castes; the *Canni Pariahs* and the *Asse Pariahs.* They are regarded as outcasts; their usual occupation is making rice winnows and baskets, and they are also cow-doctors, and have a right to flay the carcases of cows and to keep the hides for themselves. They are permitted to eat the flesh of cows that have died, and often devour it raw.

Besides these there are three jungle castes: 1st, the *Ollares,* who collect honey and wax in the jungles, where these articles are found in great abundance, and are brought down to the coast by merchants and thence exported to other countries. The Ollares wear no clothing, and regard the tiger as their uncle. When one of these animals dies, either naturally or by violence, they shave their heads in token of mourning, and eat no cooked food for three days; they may eat no flesh but that of animals which have been killed by tigers, so that the existence of these wild beasts is of great consequence to them.

The *Wedden* and the *Naiaddy* are also bushmen who hunt wild beasts and subsist upon their flesh, as well as upon herbs and roots; so that there are many among these three castes who have never tasted rice.

I have thus given you a brief account of the low castes, who come little if at all under the notice of us Europeans, and are therefore little thought of.

# LETTER XXII.

Account of the Tattares and their privileges: of the Canarese, their manner of life, divisions of caste, nuptial and funeral ceremonies, and feasts: and of the Jogis.

The heathens or idolaters of Malabar may be divided into two classes; the natives and the foreigners. The latter are of three descriptions: I. Those who visit the country for trading purposes, and sojourn in it for a long time, who are called *Pattares*. II. Those who are settled in Malabar, called *Canarese*. III. Those who merely travel through it, called *Jogis*.

The Pattares, who are many thousands in number, are Brahmins, dwelling among and beyond the mountain range. Their native country is the district round Tuticorin, Coromandel, Madura, Kotar and the neighbourhood. They hold themselves higher than the Malabar Brahmins and Namboories, who they say sprang from fishermen elevated to the Brahminical dignity by Paroese Raman. The Pattares take no share in the Administration of Government in Malabar, being regarded as foreigners, although they sometimes spend three or four years on this coast. Their occupation consists in trading, and the conveyance of commodities into the interior, They do not deal with the Company or other Europeans, but with the Canarese, Moors and Jews, whose goods they buy. They have erected factories for trading purposes at Quilon, Kully Quilon, Cochin, Trichore, Ponany and Calicut, where they possess also magazines.

The Rajahs of Malabar have granted certain commercial privileges to the Pattares. The first is exemption, to a great degree, from customs; they pay only half the usual duty for the loads they carry on their heads, and nothing for those they carry on their backs, so that we generally see them laden with two packages. They are restricted however to such goods as they can carry themselves overland. Their second privilego is an allowance of food gratis at any

Pagoda they visit, as long as they remain there: in return for this they are bound to sweep and clean the building when required. They enjoy the same privilege at the courts of several Rajahs, where they appear in great numbers on festival days, and take the opportunity to eat voraciously; on these occasions they receive also a few fanams. Thirdly, the right of carrying their loads is confined to men of their own caste and nation, an arrangement by which many thousands of their poor are supported, no other race being allowed any share in their profits.

The Pattares are subdivided into three castes, which differ but little in rank, though the respective members refuse to eat out of the same dish, or to intermarry with each other. They are called :—

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pandy | | Tanlour | |
| Toele | Pattares; or | Choolia | Pattares. |
| Toelegen | | Mockeramby | |

Their customs resemble those of the Canarese and other Brahmins, of whom we will now speak.

The Canarese who are permanently settled in Malabar, are the race best known to the Europeans; not only because the East India Company trade with them, and appoint one of their number to be their merchant, giving him the attendance of two Dutch soldiers; but also because from the shops of these people in the town we obtain all our household necessaries, except animal food. Some sell rice, others fruits, others various kinds of linen, and some again are money changers: so that there is hardly one who is not engaged in trade. For this purpose their dwellings are scattered all along the sea coast. They are much fairer than the natives of Malabar. The women are good-looking, and wear a quantity of ornaments, such as gold chains, earrings and noserings set with precious stones or pearls, and bracelets; in addition to which there is generally a thick silver ring, on one foot, hanging over the ankle. Their hair is twisted in a roll on one side, and sometimes adorned with flowers; and they wear a veil of white linen or silk, thrown over their shoulder, and fastened in front to the dress, which is of the same material. The men are in general well made; they wear white linen tunics, which may either hang loose or are girded up; and like the women they wear rings on their hands and in their ears. The head is shaved, with the exception of a long tuft of hair on the crown which they twist together, and cover with a Roomal or band.

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According to their own tradition, the Canarese came from a country called Kasti Bardy, lying in the high lands, between Goa and Bombay, and divided into twelve small provinces, from which they were driven in early times by the Moors or Moguls; they then came down to Goa, and to the districts of Canara or the Concan, where great numbers of this race are found, and thence called Canarese. The Portuguese have converted several of them to the Christian confession by violent means, tearing children from the arms of their parents in order to baptize them. As, however, under our Government no compulsion is permitted in matters of religion, we find no one now turn Romanist unless it may be one who has lost caste by the commission of some crime. They are attracted to Malabar for the sake of trade, which they first entered into with the Portuguese, and continue to carry on with the Dutch.

The Canarese in the kingdom of Cochin live in the vicinity of our towns and forts, but not inside them; for they look upon the Europeans as unclean, and will not eat or drink in our houses. They carry this feeling so far, that if they are shut up in the prisons of the East India Company, they will not touch any cooked food or rice, but only eat a little betel and cocoanuts, which are not reckoned as food; so it is the custom to allow them before sunset to go out of the town under the guard of the Serjeant of justice, that they may bathe and change their dress, and then eat the food their friends bring to them; for, like the Malabar Brahmins, it is against their laws to eat in the same clothing they wear in the town.

There are two classes of Canarese, the *Visnoumattes* and the *Schoumattes*, but there is no more difference between them than there is between two strips of sandalwood. They say that Sancratchar gave some petty laws to the Brahmins of his sect, called Schoumattes to distinguish them from the others; but the distinction is very trifling. Polygamy is forbidden among the Canarese, as it is among other Brahmins; widowers may marry five times, but not more. They give their daughters in marriage at the age of eight or nine years; for if they pass their tenth year unmarried, they lose caste, and are not allowed to marry. Parents consequently begin to look out for suitors for their daughters very early, and generally obtain for the purpose the services of their priests, who first sound the inclinations of the bridegroom and his father, and then propose the mar-

riage to them. The feelings of the girls themselves are not taken into account at all, and they are much to be pitied, being driven into matrimony so young, with the dread of their tenth year hanging like a weight over them.

When the parents of both parties have agreed together, the young man, accompanied by his friends, repairs to the house of the bride, where he stands before the door, and asks her parents :—"Will you give me your daughter." The answer is given in the affirmative ; and then the bride's father takes the bridegroom by the hand, and leads him under a canopy raised before the door for the purpose, and there puts in his hands the money, gold and jewels assigned for his daughter's dowry. The bridegroom now enters the house, where a white linen sheet is stretched between him and the bride, so that they cannot see each other. The bride's father then says :—"My daughter's name is xxx, her parents are called xxx xxx, and come from the province of xxx." If it happen that both parties belong to the same province, they must not marry, fellow provincials being regarded as brethren ; if this is not the case, the marriage is lawful, the sheet is removed, and the bridegroom takes the bride by the hand, whilst the priest reads aloud to the newly wedded pair their conjugal duties. The bride is then exhibited to all the guests with her eyes closed and her arms folded, after which she and the bridegroom are seated together on the same bench; a fire is lighted, over which they take an oath to this effect:—"We will live as the Priest has bidden us, and as our parents have lived." Some women now appear and chant a song in honour of the couple, strewing on their heads uncooked rice, which among the rich is mixed with pearl-dust. The nuptial ceremonies last five days, during which time the custom is to place three cups, with small holes in them, in a tub of water; as the water runs into the cups, if they sink straight to the bottom, it is a good omen, but if they turn and fall on one side, it is the reverse. They have a way, however, of forcing a good omen out of a bad one, by repeating the experiment till the cups sink down rightly. The whole period of the nuptials is celebrated with great rejoicings, and dancing girls are hired to exhibit their skill. The guests are sprinkled with rose water, a great mark of respect among these people, and presented with flowers. On the sixth day they rest, and on the seventh the newly wedded pair bathe, and the ceremony is concluded.

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When a first child is born, they go through various enchantments to ascertain whether the aspect of the Heavens is favourable or not, from which they foretel the infant's future fortunes, the Canarese being, like all the Indian tribes, much addicted to astrology. The father and all his friends must then remain within doors for ten days; on the twelfth they name the child, and take it to the Pagoda to exhibit it before the idol, before which they do reverence. When the boys of this race attain their tenth year, the thread is hung round their neck with much solemnity, by which ceremony they are consecrated or set apart; the head is shaved at the same time, a tuft being left on the crown, which they must preserve all their lives as a mark of their dignity.

The Canarese, as we have said, maintain themselves by trade. Children of six or seven years old are set to work at it, so that they grow up very sharp and cunning; they have no notion of honesty, and no dependence can be placed on their word. If they want to obtain any thing from us, they will keep on asking for it in the most unblushing manner; but nothing can be got from them without the greatest trouble. They defer paying their debts as long as possible, in order to gain interest on the money in the meantime; and when reproached for their dishonesty do not take it amiss, but assent to all that is said, caring little for hard words. They are also very uncourteous; if any one visits their houses they will not even ask him to come in, and think it a great favour if they give him a cup of milk.

The Canarese are more numerous in the kingdom of Cochin than in other parts of Malabar. They dwell at a distance of about half a league from the town of Cochin, possessing a bazaar, and shops of all kinds, which are usually closed during the day, whilst their owners are engaged in business in the town, and opened in the evening, when they exhibit their wares for the native purchasers. The women do not mix in trade, but occupy themselves in household cares. They are generally to be seen sitting in their doorways, gossiping together. If a European passes by, they take refuge inside the house, but their heads are soon seen peeping out at him; they are not shy of talking with our women, but have very little idea of conversation. Their houses are congregated in clusters, members of the different castes living together.

The solemnities observed on occasions of death and burial

are nearly alike among all races of Brahmins. When the Pandyt or physician has pronounced that there is no hope of life, the sick man makes his will, and bestows some presents on his daughters. The priest then comes, and enquires what heinous sins he has committed, exhorting him to repentance; his head is shaved, and he is washed with cold water for the purifying of his soul, after which he distributes alms, and presents the priest with a good milch cow, which he must hold by the tail till he dies. After his demise his next of kin must have their heads shaved and let their beards grow as a sign of mourning. The corpse is covered with a white linen cloth, and carried out by four men to be burnt, all the nearest friends and neighbours following it and the eldest son leading the procession and carrying the fire destined to consume it. When the party reach the funeral pyre, which with the wealthy is generally made of sandal wood, the corpse is laid upon it and the son kindles the flame; on the following day the ashes are collected and thrown into the river. The children of the deceased must remain at home for twelve days after the funeral; the eldest son or next of kin dressing half a measure of rice each day and making it into three balls, which, after they have been set on the ground, are thrown into the water tank to serve as food for the dead man. This ceremony is repeated every month. During these twelve days of the first mourning, the survivors may only eat once in the day, and must abstain from betel chewing, the greatest of all penances for an Indian. On the first anniversary of the death they give a great feast in memory of the deceased which is repeated every year, but with less expense.

By the laws of the Canarese sons alone inherit, and that in equal shares; the daughters are entirely excluded, and must be content with their marriage portions and whatever their father may have given them in his life-time. Unmarried daughters or widows, however, must be supported by their brothers. If a man has no son, he adopts his brother's son, or any other male next of kin.

The Canarese are divided into several castes, which differ in rank and sanctity, but have similar customs. The Brahmins may follow no manual or commercial occupation, but this last restriction is but imperfectly observed. Most of them are priests, who are supported by the rajahs or the other Canarese; some are *pandyts* or physicians. The castes of the *Pannekour* and the *Wannia* trade in all things which

have not had life. The *Sonar* are silversmiths, many of whom imitate the workmanship of Europeans very skilfully. The *Isuwede* and the *Curronby* carry the merchandize of the other Canarese, and labour in their gardens and farms. The *Banda* are soldiers; they are not found in Cochin, but are very numerous in Canara and other districts: the Portuguese make use of the services of those who have embraced christianity.

The festivals of the Canarese differ from those of the natives of Malabar, because among these heathens each nation has separate tutelary deities, in whose honour they hold special feasts. There are eleven of these festivals annually.

1. The first is *Isamparocah* or New Year's day which is held in the month of March, when the days and nights are equal; at this season the Canarese make merry, and wish each other joy, bathing with certain ceremonies and putting on new apparel: the priests announce, from their astrological observations, which will prove unlucky days in the ensuing year.

2. *Tirunal* is solemnized in the month of April, when any one who chooses may go to the pagoda seven days in succession and receive food, which it is the business of the wealthy persons of their nation to provide. This feast is held in honour of the building of their pagodas. At night lamps are lighted, and they make all kinds of rejoicing, and adorn the elephants belonging to the Pagodas with costly housings, making their *Sombail* before them.

3. The feast of *Mantjemy* is held in July in honour of the cobra capella, to which they offer milk and sandalwood, placing them in the tree which the reptile inhabits.

4. *Tzontum Pounou* is solemnized in August, when they wind round their necks a new thread, the token of their high caste; this service is performed for them (whilst they bend in reverence before the fire,) by the priests, who receive some fanams in return.

5. *Astamy*, in the same month, is a day of penitence, when they abstain from food and drink for 24 hours, and implore forgiveness for their sins.

6. *Wine Szoute*, a festival which lasts three or four days, is celebrated in September, in honour of their God *Gonnipatti*, whose image they form at that season, of wood, stone, or silver, according to their means and piety. They affirm that this deity was born on a mountain, having four arms

and the trunk of an elephant; and that they were divinely commanded to keep this festival in his honour.

7. Ten days after this is kept *Tje Hordesje*, a feast of rejoicing for the fruits of the earth. It is celebrated in the pagodas, which are hung round with every species of fruit that can be procured; and, as in the Jewish feast of tabernacles (at least as kept in this country), the worshippers erect in their villages booths of green palm leaves and suspend various fruits around them. This feast of the Canarese is attended by the rajah of Cochin in person.

8. *Mannemy*, the feast of the school children, is a sort of holiday to that class, when they are released from school for nine days and go about the houses of the Canarese singing and dressed in their costliest attire: they sometimes enter the town on these occasions in their holiday trim.

9. *Dewaly*, is a feast celebrated at the end of October in memory of an act of divine benevolence, by which they were delivered from a powerful giant called Nabakasser, who had put to death many persons in their country. On this occasion the people anoint themselves at night with oil, and bathe, and in the morning rub their bodies with powder ground from sandalwood; throughout the day they make great banquets, and at night illuminate the lamps all round.

10. *Terou*, is the feast of pagodas, when their idol *Winke Tapati* is placed on a triumphal car and carried about in state. To assist in drawing this car is regarded as a mark of sanctity, and in some countries the people suffer themselves to be crushed under its wheels; here however they are wiser. The car is drawn on amidst shouting multitudes, to the sound of music and drums, some climbing upon it, others hanging to its sides like burrs, whilst others strew cocoanuts to be crushed under it; the Bayadères dancing around it all the time. This festival takes place at the end of November.

11. In February is the feast of *Chigma* or Fortune. For ten days before it begins, drums are beaten every evening, and the people adorn themselves with flowers till the period of the full moon, when the festival commences, and is celebrated with great solemnity and many extravagances. Boats full of water colored with turmeric are placed in the bazaars, and the people plunge into them, or sprinkle themselves with the contents, and run about in troops with drummers and trumpeters; in the evening they have exhibitions of giants and giantesses, which are made to dance



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by persons placed inside them, or of ships, elephants and other works of art. In the meantime, the dancing girls exhibit their skill, the Canarese joining in the dance; whilst others carry about long areca trees on their shoulders, running as if they were mad, the old and the idle hurrying about with them, and exhausting their small strength. These areca trees are wound round with *olas*, and are finally burnt, in memory of the terrible giant *Kammetja Scressel*, who was burnt by their deity.

So much for the festivals of the Canarese. They have a bishop who resides on the banks of the Ganges, and who takes a journey once in eleven or twelve years to visit his flock in distant countries. He wears no splendid habiliments, but has only a cloth wound around him, a proof of sanctity in the eyes of these benighted people. They are bound, when he comes among them, to give him the tithe of their property, but I will not vouch for their conscientious performance of this duty, however, the bishop always returns laden with treasures to the banks of the Ganges, where he inhabits a large dwelling in which all the pilgrims who flock by thousands to that river receive food and lodging.

The third class of foreigners who are met with in Malabar are called *Jogis*. It is a mistake to suppose that all the *Jogis* are brahmins: they are composed of persons from various heathen nations who have bound themselves by a vow to wander about as pilgrims either for a term of years, or for their whole lives, gaining their livelihood by mendicancy. They pretend to a peculiar degree of holiness, and the more to impress this upon the people, and to work on their liberality, they wear the scantiest clothing, and disfigure themselves frightfully, covering themselves with ashes, and letting their hair and nails grow to an inordinate length, till they look like monsters. Some carry instruments of torture to castigate their persons, the more to mislead the poor people. They sit idle the whole day with no occupation but tobacco smoking; and when they want something to eat, they merely ask for it, having so little modesty that if it is not given them, they scold in the strongest terms, not sparing the rajahs themselves. They will sometimes sit down before a man's door and refuse to stir till they have got what they want. I can believe that some may adopt this mode of life from a vain notion of religion, but there is no doubt that most of them are great rogues. European jews and christains are some-

times found among them, who join them for the sake of obtaining fine jewels, which are often bestowed on the jogis by the superstitious people of Bengal, Coromandel, and Golconda: they then sell their acquisitions by stealth, and conceal the money in some secure place, as they may not carry it about with them.

With these jogis may be classed the fakirs, mussulman pilgrims who live in like manner by mendicancy, and in the Mogul kingdom are often the recipients of the splendid presents which are given to the monarch. This coast is annually visited by fakirs from the East Indian islands, on their way to Mecca and Medina, who generally return wearing dark grey cloaks they have received there, garments which are so highly venerated that all their fellow-mussulmans kiss them; and these black mahometans, many of whom look like thorough rogues, are held as great and learned men when they return to their homes.

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## LETTER XXIII.

Malabar temples—Religious service—Revenues attached to the temples—Mode of consecration.

I shall now give you a description of the temples in Malabar and their form of structure.

They are termed pagodas, or houses of the gods, who are supposed to inhabit them and to receive in them the devotions of the pious. They are mostly built of stone; the grandest glitter with copper roofs. All the architectural talents of the heathen have been devoted to the erection of these edifices: their dwellings on the other hand are wretched; generally mere low mean huts; but the temples far surpass in grandeur any of the royal palaces. I have seen a highly ornamented pagoda at Cranganoor, in which the gate way of the exterior gallery is surmounted with an arch of such skilful workmanship that even in Europe it would be admired as a work of art. We sometimes find arches and facings of marble, a material not found in Malabar. A wall furnished with a good front gateway encloses a quadrangle; within this enclosure is an empty uncovered space, free to every one, even the christians and the unclean castes. This reminds me of the court of the gentiles, in Solomon's temple. The pagoda itself stands in the centre of this enclosure; the exterior of the building consists of a covered gallery open on the inside, though from without it appears to be all one. This gallery, which traverses all four sides of the edifice may be likened to the second court of the temple, frequented by the priests and Israelites. Within this again stands the house itself, surmounted by a pointed roof, and in the centre of this sanctuary there is a square stone elevation like an altar, its four corners furnished with four columns, on which stands the idol. This image is made of various materials. I have seen silver specimens; they are sometimes gilt, but copper is the most common material. I have a few of these in my possession, which were taken at the pillage of the rich pagoda of Pounetour Namboori; they give one a good idea of the hideousness of the gods before whom these people prostrate themselves. Some are likenesses of men with elephant's trunks, others have four, six,

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or more arms, and others two or more heads. The temples are all dedicated to special deities, as was the case with those of the Greeks and Romans, and the patron idol in each pagoda presides over the others; his form surpassing theirs both in size and splendour. I have seen a copper cow at the pagoda at Cranganoor, almost as large as life. As the gods are supposed to delight in illuminations, several lamps both iron and copper, fastened into the walls of the second court on both sides, are lighted up on feast days.

There are cavities along the walls of the inside gallery, something like baking ovens, in which rajahs, princes, or private individuals may deposit their treasures for security. The keys of these treasure chambers are always kept by the proprietors, who may obtain access to them when they please with the assistance of the brahmins who have the care of the temple. No christian, jew, or moor, may penetrate into this sanctuary, though the gates are suffered to stand open, and we may approach as far as the threshold, but not near enough to obtain a sight of the interior; this I have found by experience; for if we attempted to intrude too far, we should be pushed back, as the temple would be polluted, and must then undergo fresh consecration and various ceremonies in order to render it fit again for the offices of religion. This would be the case even if we were merely to enter the tanks or wells in which the brahmins, bound by their law, bathe daily; they would be contaminated and require fresh consecration to purify them. For their folly is such that they imagine that purity consists not in the cleanliness of the soul, but of that of the body. Not alone men of other religions are prohibited from entering their temples, but the same rule is extended even to the low and despised castes among themselves, a practice which runs counter to the notions of all other nations. For as the mere touch of these miserable creatures would defile a brahmin or a member of the higher castes, so would their presence the temple of the gods, of whose favour and notice they are unworthy. The daily services of the temple consist of prayers and devotions offered three times a day, morning, noon, and night. The devotees perambulate the outer court thrice, making their *sombaie*, or reverence (a gesture performed by bending forward and striking the forehead with clasped hands), each time they come opposite the door of the pagoda. The brahmins observe a similar routine in the innermost gallery of the sanctuary, muttering prayers all the time. Then the

first priest steps up to the altar and sprinkles holy water and flowers on the image, which act forms the daily sacrifice, for no blood must be shed in or near the temple. Estates are invariably attached to the pagodas from which they derive considerable revenues; and their wealth is increased by the offerings and alms of the faithful. I saw at Porcād two stone images, man and woman, which have stood for ages by the side of the river, so near, that in the rainy season they are flooded; bags hang from their necks to receive the offerings of passengers on the river, who throw into them a portion of their fruits, rice, nẹly, &c., as an alms-giving to the adjacent pagoda. Rich pagodas are burdened with a number of brahmins, perhaps 200 or 300, who must be fed: for so these Malabar priests cunningly contrive to be supported gratis. Besides this, at many of the rajah's courts are places called *marroe*, where food is dispensed to any brahmin who demands it. There is one good thing about these pagodas, that they furnish provision for any wayfarers of their own religion, who resort to them; rice is never refused. They serve in this respect like hospitals or charitable establishments, where a man, however poor and destitute he may be, can always find shelter.

I had almost forgotten to state, that when in the daily service the priests come to the performance of the Sombaie, or reverence, the first priest holds up the image while the others bend their knees to it.

On certain national feasts a solemn procession takes place. The idol, finely ornamented and placed in a palanquin or set up on an elephant and covered with a canopy, is paraded about accompanied with music, and every body must perform the Sombaie before it. Thus still exists the procession of the tabernacle of Moloch, which, among the Egyptians, Syrians and other Gentiles, used to cause the children of Israel to sin. The low castes who may not enter the temple, are permitted to attend at a distance on some of these occasions, and to deposit their donations of fanams before the temple: for though not admitted, they are compelled to contribute to its support, as if it were a privilege so to do. They possess temples of their own constructed of dried palm leaves; and if they could afford to build them of stone they must yet cover them with palm leaves: they have no brahmins for their priests, but members of their own caste minister the offices of religion.

Near some pagodas, as those of Valdurti and Monton,

outside the enclosure stands a stone, at which the Nairs, who are permitted to partake of the flesh of all animals except cows, offer sacrifices of blood: here also they offer up vows to their deities to obtain the boon of fertility for their estates, promising in return to sacrifice so many cocks. When the day for the sacrifice arrives, thousands assemble, and the Nairs officiate at the solemnity in place of the brahmins, who may not touch the bodies of dead animals. The chief called *Belka Paru* first advances, cuts off the head of a cock which he throws on the ground, letting the blood run on the stone, and then he takes the body home to his house, and devours it with his family. The others in succession follow his example, each sacrificing and eating his own cock. In the consecration of a new pagoda the building is first sprinkled with water and the leaves of the Ixora, and then smeared with cowdung; this done ten or twelve cows, as sacred beasts, are tied up inside the building and fed with grass; then with waters taken from four sources, the Ganges, the sea, the river near which the pagoda stands, and the opposite side of the same river, they sanctify the idol, the presiding genius of the temple: they next take a number of dishes (they must not be fewer than 49—but generally there are as many as 101 of them) made of gold, silver, copper or stone, filled with raw rice and covered with party coloured cloths, over which are strewed flowers and figures representing the 27 stars under the influence of which the days of the month are placed. These figures are made of gold or silver, on each of which the name of the star is inscribed. These dishes remain in the pagoda for a period of 21 or 41 days according to pleasure, during which time the brahmins assembled to the same number that there are dishes, offer up prayers to the tri-une godhead, Brama, Vishnu and Siva; when this is over, a fire lighted in the quadrangle must be brought before the altar, on which the image is then set up, and fastened with mortar mixed up of various adhesive substances, pearl-dust, sugar, honey, cake, &c., and the brahmins must be regaled for eleven or twelve days.

If the temple were to be polluted by the presence of a christian or a member of the low castes, 21 dishes of water with flowers must be introduced to purify it, the idol must be washed again with the four waters, a feast lasting for three days must be given to the Namboories, and the temple swept thrice a day and smeared with cow dung.

# LETTER XXIV.

Superstitions of the Natives—How they consecrate their houses—Their charms against the evil eye—Auguries on building their houses—The respect for the Kalu tree, and the state of departed souls—Exorcisms—Lucky and unlucky Omens.

In this letter I propose to satisfy your curiosity respecting the superstitious practices and opinions which prevail among the benighted heathen, in the midst of whom I am at present sojourning.

A member of the higher castes will never inhabit his newly built house, until it has been solemnly purified and consecrated by the priests; because it is supposed to have been defiled by the builders, who belong to an unclean caste. Among the grandees the ceremony of consecration takes place in the following manner. An idol is carried thrice round the house, to the sound of trumpets, and deposited before the eastern door. The priests then enter the house, and having laid some cowdung mixed with ashes on a *pisang** leaf they mutter some prayers over it, after which a Namboori sprinkles the house, first with water from a copper basin in which are placed the small red flowers of the Ixora shrub called by the Portuguese *Foule Paran*, and then with the cowdung; the idol is then brought inside the house, and the Namboories proceed to eat some cakes. These ceremonies duly performed, a great feast is held outside the house, the food consisting of rice, butter, pisang, milk and curry; the guests, who have been first thoroughly smeared with oil (like the ancient heathens, who used to anoint their guests as a mark of honor), sitting cross-legged around the building. While on the subject of their houses, I must mention their superstition about the east door; when they go out for the first time in the morning it must always be through this entrance, which is considered lucky, because from it

* The *pisang* is the *Areca catechu*, or Betel-nut palm (Trans.), See Brandes' Dict. of Science, &c.

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they first behold the morning sun, before which they bend with reverence.

They are in the habit of setting up a *Molik* or figure in their fields, young plantations, and houses, and particularly in their roads: not for the purpose of scaring the birds, as is done in Europe, but to act as a charm against the evil eye. This Molik may be the image either of an idol, a man, or an ape, or sometimes it is merely some kind of painted vessel. If the eye of a person possessed of a malign aspect fall on this object, it is robbed of all power of working mischief either to plants or to anything else. This superstition prevails not only among the heathen; for there are some christians who are for ever talking of the *Tocca Olhos.* I was told by the Dutch Official at Paponetti, that there was a Mocqua chief living there, whose countenance was supposed by the natives, to be endowed with this pernicious influence; so that he was entreated never to enter fields when the plants were in bloom, lest he should injure them; which request he observed. They imagine that this evil eye works no harm to the lands and plants of the possessor, but rather increases their fertility.

In commencing the building of a house, the first prop must be put up on the east side; the carpenters open three or four cocoanuts, spilling the juice as little as possible, and put some tips of betel leaves into them; and, from the way these float in the liquid, they foretel whether the house will be lucky or unlucky, whether it will stand for a long or short period, and whether another will ever be erected on its site. I have been told that the heathens say that the destruction of fort Paponetti by our arms was foretold by the builders from these auguries. They receive for the performance of this rite one or two Cochin fanams, three measures of rice, and a garment worth three fanams.

There is an odd shaped tree called a *Kalu,* the stem of which seems to be formed by several twisted branches growing into each other. It is generally very large, and its spreading branches shoot out roots, many of which fix themselves in the ground, thus furnishing fresh nourishment to enable the branches to extend further. This tree is esteemed sacred, and is hung about with lamps which are lighted up in the evening. They have a legend, that the chief of the minor gods, Cheraman by name, was despatched by the supreme deity to introduce certain improvements on the earth. Fatigued by his long journey through a dreary

wilderness without food or drink, he stretched himself beneath the shadow of the banian tree to seek repose and refreshment; and his object was so marvellously effected that he arose with his strength as completely renovated as if he had partaken of a hearty meal. In memory of this event, this tree is dedicated to the pagodas in the neighbourhood of which one is always to be found: they are also planted there for the refreshment of departed souls: for the majority and the most intelligent of these heathens believe that in the beginning, the deity created a certain number of souls, which inhabit sometimes human and sometimes brute bodies; but that on quitting human bodies the souls repose for a century under the refreshing shade of the banian, after which they transmigrate into other bodies, either of men or of beasts according to their conduct during their past life. It is considered a piece of great good fortune to transmigrate into the body of a white cow; whilst to pass into that of a buffalo is just the reverse, as that animal undergoes great ill-treatment at the hands of the Malabars, being the object of their utmost contempt and aversion.

The people believe that during the intermediate period of a hundred years, the souls of the departed visit their descendants. They therefore prepare, either within or without their houses, little apartments or huts, which are fresh smeared every morning, and furnished with a small bench, about a foot in length and a hand breadth from the ground, on which toddy is placed; which, in the evening, as the departed spirits have not touched it, they themselves drink, and it is considered a hallowed beverage. They always put aside a little rice at their meals, or strew some grains on the ground for these ghosts: and if they have more in the dish than they can eat, they throw out the remainder to the crows, and this also is put to the account of the spirits. They perform a ceremony like this on the feast of the souls, in the month of July.

They carry their ideas of witchcraft to an unequalled pitch; to this influence the most dire diseases are imputed in many places, and it is supposed to have power both to cause and cure them, so that apothecaries and doctors would find it difficult to obtain a livelihood here: they are less foolish in the neighbourhood of Cochin. It is said (by the majority, that is) that there exist 36,000 demons, of whom a few are good; and the worst among them are *Tjatte Pannikerri*, *Tjangadi* and *Cooli Mootootoe Panni-*

*kerri.* They ascribe to these spirits the power of occupying the bodies of men whose souls have departed: they have no power over christians, even those who are so merely in name not in heart. Every individual has his own special demon whom he serves, and who in return assists him in the execution of his projects. They suppose that if a man has no other way of venting his wrath on his adversary, he can send his own demon to do it for him. To effect this purpose he must make an image of the demon, and perform certain ceremonies before it, upon which it sets forth, and assails the victim with all kinds of diseases, madness, convulsions, &c. In order to discover whether these disorders proceed from natural causes or from malign influence, the friends of the patient repair to a *Canniane* or soothsayer, who determines the question by the result obtained from counting up some cowries, and can also indicate the person from whom the evil spirit was sent; the latter immediately confesses his guilt, or if he refuses, is brought before the rajah and compelled to do so, while the sufferer on his part must promise to make restitution of any thing to which the other party had a lawful claim. The exorcism proceeds as follows. A man of the washerman caste is introduced who has a drum shaped like an hour glass; he describes a magic circle on the ground within which he makes various characters, in red and white, and then throws in pieces of betel leaves, rice, turmeric, Ixora flowers, areca nuts, tobacco, palm leaves, and date shells, &c. A woman taken from the household of the party who has employed the aid of the demon, is made to sit down facing the circle, clothed in a white garment, her hair floating loose, her arms folded, and carrying on her bosom a cashew nut leaf. The washerman now beats his drum, singing at the same time a magic song: on which the unclean spirit quits the patient and enters the body of the woman, who immediately sets up a tremendous howling, and begins to jump about like a mad woman; then the demon speaking through her voice announces the rewards he expects and the rites to be performed in return for the alacrity with which he has executed the mission of his employer. These being promised, the spirit leaves the woman, who falls down as if dead and lies in this posture for an hour; at the expiration of which the washerman takes away all that he put in the circle and eats it with his household: he receives four fanams in payment for his service; a like sum is also paid to the Canniane.

The official at Paponetti told me that he had witnessed very strange effects from these exorcisms at which he had himself sometimes been called in to keep order. On one occasion, a woman was brought in to him, very ill, to all appearance dead. Her friends complained, that an evil spirit had been sent to her by a Nair woman, whom they produced, and that the patient had lain seven days without food, like a corpse. The accused was asked whether the tale were true; she replied in the affirmative adducing as the motive, that a little piece of gold, worth about two rix dollars, which she had inherited and wore as an ornament on her neck, had been stolen from her. The officer commanded her to recall the spirit; this she performed with the usual rites, and the sufferer who lay inanimate, opened her eyes, in his presence, asked for cheese and betel, and in short was restored to perfect health and walked home.

These people are also addicted to the observance of lucky and unlucky days; Monday and Thursday come under the latter category, and Sunday under the former. The last day of the month is unlucky. It is a bad omen to meet a cat or a snake, on first going out in the morning, and they will turn back to escape passing it: this they will do also if a crow flies past on the left hand; on the right hand it is considered lucky. It is a good sign to sneeze with the face turned towards the house from which they have come out, but with the face turned in the direction in which they are going it is unlucky. Leo is the most propitious sign of the zodiac, and it is a piece of good fortune to be born, and business is best executed under its influence. Thus you see, dear friend, how superstition rules this land.

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# LETTER XXV.

Discrepancy between the Chronologies of Holy Scripture, and those of the Gentile Nations. An account of the feast days of the Malabars.

The science of chronology has ever proved one of the most difficult subjects which have engaged the attention of the learned, who have not a little increased its perplexity by attempting to reconcile the system of Holy Scripture with those of the gentiles; this seems to me a hopeless endeavour, for all the traditions of eastern nations, are extravagantly fabulous and inconsistent with each other. This is very conspicuous among the nations of the East Indies, where the chronological systems of China, Pegu, and Malabar, are totally distinct. How therefore can we rely upon them? The system of Holy Scriptures on the other hand, is both genuine and simple, narrating a regular succession of events, and seasons. St. Augustine remarks with justice in his work *De Civitate Dei:* "We need not doubt that those things related by profane writers which are contrary to the statements of Holy Scripture are false, for reason teaches us that what God through his Holy Spirit speaking to us in the Holy Scriptures relates, is more worthy of credit than the words of men, because he can foretel long before the things which are to happen."

If we apply this passage to the chronological theory in vogue among the Malabars we shall see confirmation of its truth. They affirm that many thousand centuries have elapsed from the creation of the world to the present time, and they make use in their reckoning of time, of certain periods which they call *Diva Varussam* supposed to be divinely appointed; each of these periods or cycles consists of 365 years, 3 months, 2 days, and 30 hours, and several of these *Diva Varussam* make up a great cycle or age consisting of some thousands of years.

The first age from the creation of the world is called *Crida-Ugam,* and this lasted for the space of 4,800: *Diva Varussam* amounting to a period of 1,753,210 years, 6 months, 24 days, and 16 hours.

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The second age *Treda-Ugam*, contained 3,600 *D. V.*, or 1,314,908 years, 10 months, 8 days, 14 hours.

The third age *Duavara-Ugam*, contained 2,400 *D. V.*, or 872,600 years, 4 months, 12 days, 9 hours.

The fourth age *Cali Ugam*, will consist of 12,200 *D. V.*, or 438,032 years, 8 months, 6 days and 56 hours; of this age only 4,827 years have elapsed up to the present time.

While on this subject we must observe, that the year begins in October (which they call *Tallu-Massam*) and that each day is divided into 60 hours.

The above-mentioned system of chronology is only preserved and adhered to in their temples; in their daily intercourse they make use of certain epochs and eras which are mentioned in their legal documents and letters.

In the low lands of Malabar, especially in the kingdom of Cochin, there are two of these eras. The first is the year *Coilam* or *Coulam*, which takes its name from the northern Coilam, the place whence, after his partition of the kingdom, Cheramperoumal started, either for the Ganges, or, according to the Moors, for Mecca. The current year, 1723, they date the year of Coilam 899.

The second era the year *Pooda Vaipum*; which they call the new style, was first established when the island of Vypeen was recovered from the sea and inhabited by men. This was 383 years ago.

In the high lands of Malabar, and in other heathen nations, there is another system of cycles of 60 years. This was ordained by the prophet Paroese Raman. Each of the 60 years has a peculiar name, so that it may be always known how many years of the cycle have run. When the number is complete they begin again from the beginning.

They divide the year into 12 months; the first day of each month, corresponds with the thirteenth or fourteenth of ours.

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Magaram | or Jany. | has 30 days. | Carctadagam | or July | has 31 days. |
| Cumbam | Feby. | — 30 | Chingam | Aug. | — 31 |
| Menum | March | — 30 | Cunnee | Sept. | — 31 |
| Madum | April | — 31 | Toolam | Oct. | — 29 |
| Eddavum | May | — 31 | Vrechecum | Nov. | — 30 |
| Methunum | June | — 32 | Dhanoo | Dec. | — 29 |

There are certain annual festivities universally observed.

1*st.* On the 1st day of the month Madum, they celebrate the feast Biloe or the New year; not that the year commences then, but at the season of the departure of the Em-

peror Cheramperoumal in September, from which era they date. In the morning of this day, they put some gold into a copper basin, and scatter Ixora flowers about; besides distributing money or food, and illuminating, after which they bathe. This feast is solemnized in honour of Vishnu.

*2nd.* They hold another feast called *Pattamoedasjam* on the 10th of the same month, when they say that the sun has attained its meridian, and the days and nights are of equal length. They are accustomed on this day to offer vows in the pagodas, to illuminate with lamps, they carry the idols about in procession, and fire cannons or guns, which latter is a religious ceremony used on high occasions. These solemnities, which last for forty days and terminate in the Pattamoedasjam, are dedicated to the sun.

*3rd.* On the new moon of the month of July, they keep the feast *Baauw* with fasting and prayers on account of the arrival of the souls of their departed ancestors, who they believe visit their houses on that day. They prepare and set food outside for them, which food becomes the property of the crows: and the dwellers by the sea shore bathe for the purification of the said souls.

*4th.* In August comes the feast *Onam;* or the birth-day of Sida, the wife of *Sri Rama* or Vishnu. This is observed by some people for four days, by others for seven. They raise a hillock in front of their dwellings, smeared with cowdung and strewed with flowers, on which they set up the image of Vishnu, clothed in a new garment, and provided with an open cocoanut for food. Those castes who are allowed to partake of fish must abstain from it on this day, and the upper people distribute garments to their servants.

*5th.* Sixteen days after *Onam* comes the feast of *Magam* in honour of *Paramesiri,* or *Parwadi,* the wife of Parameswari or Vishnu in another form. For, as you must know, they teach, that Vishnu underwent thirteen transmigrations. The ceremonies observed on this occasion resemble those of the preceding feast.

*6th.* This same feast of *Magam* or *Onam* is held also in September or even in October, in memory of the goddess *Patrakalli* also called *Pagodi.* The ceremonies coincide with those of the feast of Ona, except that cakes are to be baked with sugar and laid before the goddess.

*7th.* The feast *Tirawedira* is celebrated in December. This is an occasion of mourning and lamentation among the women, who now complain to the gods that they have not

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been equally endowed intellectually with man: They must not sleep all the night, nor partake of cooked rice.

*8th.* In January they observe the feast *Parmy*, the birth-day of Pagodi Sri Couroumba, when they kill several cocks and offer them before the Pagodas: The Brahmins are excluded the temples for three days on this occasion.

*9th.* This feast to Parmy is also held in February; and at Paldurti in Cochin in March; when a party of Nairs bound by an oath, cause themselves to be suspended by an iron passed through the skin of their backs to a swing *(wip)* and remain thus hanging for some time and fencing with sword and shield: a frightful spectacle! On this occasion they exhibit various images, marching them about in procession as the Papists do on Shrove Tuesday; and thus it is a great time for merry making. It is the only festival to which all castes, even the lowest, are admitted, and it lasts two days. It is dedicated to the sister of Pagodi or the goddess Sri Couroumba, called Assagia.

*10th.* In this month also is celebrated the feast *Oel Pouram* or consecration, in memory of the visit of the sea god to the Pagoda *Arad poldu;* a stone yet remains standing by a little stream at the corner of the Pagoda in memory of this event: Nearly 25,000 pilgrims repair here on this day.

*11th.* In March is held the feast *Oelsagam*, when the idols are carried about in a palanquin or on an elephant, accompanied by armed men who make all kinds of rejoicing with trumpets, games, and dances. The last day of *Oelsagam* is the feast *Proe Ona* on which occasion they bathe. This feast is celebrated in memory of Siva and Vishnu.

*12th.* Eight days after, the feast *Asfami* takes place; on this day (which is also an annual fair) the souls in torment have recourse to Seeva, and the festival is celebrated with great solemnity in the temple of Courour.

I hope I have not wearied you with this subject, for though not a pleasant one, it is needful in order to form an accurate idea of the part of the world in which I now reside.

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# LETTER XXVI.

Account of the Pepper, Turmeric, Cardamom, and Areca of Malabar.

You who live amid the bustle of trade, and daily load your magazines with costly wares collected from all quarters of the world, will doubtless be interested in reading about the commerce of Malabar, and the commodities it affords, which it shall be the purpose of this letter to describe.

Pepper, the cheapest but by no means the least useful of spices, is the chief production of Malabar, and is collected in such abundance and good quality, that this country may justly be styled the Mother of Pepper.* It grows well in the lowlands, but with far more luxuriance in the elevated tracts and along the hills and mountains. It is not planted in open fields, but in the close neighbourhood of trees, around which the branches climb, as the plant requires support. The leaves are large, and the pepper-corns spring from them, clustering in rows close to the stems. Their colour is green. These plants, which climb to a great height, last generally for eighteen or twenty years, when other grafts or shoots are substituted for them. When the pepper is dried, it acquires a black colour, occasioned doubtless by its natural heat; as is the case with cloves, which when first

* The Black pepper vine (Piper nigrum) is indigenous to the forests of Malabar and Travancore, and for centuries has been an article of exportation to European countries from that coast. Although growing in other countries of the East, Malabar pepper is considered to be the best. Its cultivation is very simple, and is effected by cuttings or suckers put down before the commencement of the rains in June. The soil should be rich, but if too much moisture be allowed to accumulate near the roots, the young plants are apt to rot. In three years the vine begins to bear. They are planted chiefly in hilly districts, but thrive well enough in the low country in the moist climate of Malabar. They are usually planted at the base of trees which have rough or prickly bark, such as the Jack, the Erythrina, Cashew nut, Mango tree, and others of similar description. They will climb about 20 or 30 feet, but are purposely kept lower than that During their growth it is requisite to remove all suckers, and the vine should be pruned, thinned and kept clear of weeds. After the berries have been gathered they are dried on mats in the sun, turning from red to black. They must be plucked before quite ripe, and if too early they will spoil. White pepper is the same fruit freed from its

plucked are white, but when they have been laid out to dry, black spots appear and spread by degrees, till the whole clove assumes a dark hue. The unripe pepper-corns which get sometimes mixed with the ripe ones, dry away into powder, or shrivel up, owing to the heat of the latter. For this reason the East India Company never take new pepper by weight, but let it lie bye for some months in warehouses till the unripe corns have had time to decay; and the bad are then winnowed from the good in the presence of the merchants.

Many persons erroneously suppose that the white and black pepper are different plants. This is not the case. I have been told here that there are two methods of manufacturing the former from the latter; either by corroding the upper coating of the corn with lime, or by laying it aside for ten or twelve years, when the outer coat will dry off, and the pepper-corn appear white.

The pepper of Malabar is that most prized: yet it is not equally good in all parts of the country. The pepper produced in South Malabar and Quilon is smaller than that of the North. No difference however is discernible in the fruit when exported, as it is all mixed together. It is the principal article of trade of the East India Company in Malabar; it is calculated that they purchase on the average 2,000,000 lbs. annually, collecting it in the factories of Cochin, and Chetwa in the North, and of Porcad, Kully-Quilon, Quilon and Pesa in the South. The sovereigns of these places, and those likewise of Tekkenkoor and Berkenkoor, who send their pepper to Porcad, have made an agreement with the East India Company not to supply this article to any other nation. We cannot help saying that such a stipulation is

outer skin, the ripe berries being macerated in water for the purpose. In this latter state they are smaller, of a greyish white colour, and have a less aromatic or pungent taste. The pepper vine is very common in the hilly districts of Travancore, especially in Cottayam, Meenachel, and Chenganacherry districts, where, at an average calculation, about 5,000 candies are produced annually.

Long pepper (Chavica Roxburghii) is another cultivated species. It is readily propagated by cuttings. The stems are annual, and the roots live for several years, and when cultivated, usually yield three or four crops, after which they seem to become exhausted, and require to be renewed by fresh planting. The berries of this species of pepper are lodged in a pulpy matter like those of *P. nigrum*. They are first green, becoming red when ripe. Being hotter when unripe, they are then gathered and dried in the sun, when they change to a dark grey colour. The spikes are imported entire. The taste of the berries is pungent though rather faint. For further information on the vegetable products of Malabar, see Drury's useful Plants of India.

hard both upon the subjects and the settlers; for it gives the East India Company the monopoly of Malabar products, and the settlers have no choice of a market, but must perforce sell to the Company when they might obtain a much higher price from other countries. It is true they often find means of exporting their pepper by stealth; but as there are officers posted all round the sea coast, these smuggled goods are often seized and confiscated to the Company. The native princes sometimes participate in these smuggling transactions, though they never dare to confess it, being bound by contract to assist the Company. And indeed in their contracts with that body, they have looked well after their own interests; for they have secured the privilege of exporting on their own account 100 or more kandies, which they sell to the merchants at a good price. The contracts are renewed every year, when the East India Company send two members from the council to make an agreement about the price with the merchants, in the presence of the Rajahs of Porcād, Kully-Quilon, and Quilon. When the price is settled, presents are offered to those princes. In Cochin and Chetwa, however, thi does not take place, the price in those countries being always fixed. The pepper costs generally 11½ or 12 ducats per kandy of 500 lbs: but this sum does not all go to the merchants, as they are obliged to pay a duty of half a ducat in some places, and more in the south, to the Rajah of the country.

The East India Company have never succeeded in persuading the rajahs of Travancore and Colastri, and still less the Zamorin, to enter into a similar compact, because they are aware that it must be prejudicial to their interests. For being free to sell their pepper to any one, they have the advantage of being able to demand a much higher price for it; and they also prevent its being properly sifted and cleansed, so that it is very inferior in quality. This pepper is chiefly bought by the English, and sent not only to Europe, but through private traders to Persia, Surat, Mocha, Coromandel, and Bengal, thereby causing detriment to the Company's traffic in those parts.

The French are engaged in this trade at Calicut, and the Danes at Eddawa, a place near Quilon: but having little money and less credit, it is but little they can accomplish. The new merchants of Ostend also are beginning to take part in it; but as they pay too high a price for their pepper (as well as for their linen goods), it is probable they make

but little profit by it. The Zamorin has granted to the four chief princes of Malabar the exclusive right of exporting this article.

The second plant. that flourishes here and is exported to Europe, is the turmeric, called by the natives *Burri-Burri*, or native saffron. This root is found in South Malabar, but too poor for exportation by the Company: they purchase the better sort, which grows in the north, in the territories of the Zamorin and Colastri. The turmeric plant closely resembles ginger, both in its root and leaf, and is planted every year. When ripe, the root is cut up, steeped in water, and then spread on mats or cloths to dry in the sun. It is used in Europe, as a dye, and in India in the preparation of a dish they call *curry*, which has a yellow colour. Its price is 10 ducats per kandy, and the East India Company collect at Calicut and Cannanore generally 200 kandies in a season.

The third production of Malabar which is exported to Europe is the cardamom; I am not aware that the true cardamom grows in any other part of the world.* Two different species of this plant are found here: one in Cochin or South Malabar, and the other, generally known by the name of Cannanore cardamom, in the kingdom of Colastri. The first is the poorest of the two, and is not exported by the East India Company, but by the inhabitants, the English and others, who send it to Surat, Persia, Mocha, Coromandel, and Bengal, where the *mussulmans* use it in their

* The cardamoms of commerce (Elettaria cardamomum) are either cultivated or gathered wild. In the Travancore forests they are found at elevations of three or five thousand feet. The mode of obtaining them is to clear the forests of trees, when the plants spontaneously grow up in the cleared ground. A similar mode has been mentioned by Roxburgh, who states that in Wynaad before the commencement of the rains in June, the cultivators seek the shadiest and woodiest sides of the loftier hills, the trees are felled and the ground cleared of weeds, and in about three months the cardamom plant springs up. In four years the shrub will have attained its full height, when the fruit is produced and gathered in the month of November, requiring no other preparation than drying in the sun.

The plant continues to yield fruit till the seventh year when the stem is cut down, new plants arising from the stumps. They may also be raised from seeds. Cardamoms are much esteemed as a condiment, and great quantities are annually shipped to Europe from Malabar and Travancore. In commerce there are three varieties known as the *short*, *short-longs*, and *the long-longs*. Of these the *short* are more coarsely ribbed, of a brown colour and are called the Malabar cardamoms or Wynaad cardamoms. They are reckoned the best of the three. The *long-longs* are more finely ribbed and of a paler colour. The seeds are white and shrivelled. The *short-longs*, merely differ from the latter in being shorter or less pointed. It is usual to mix the several kinds together when ready for exportation. Some care is required in the process of

food, and particularly in a dish of rice called *brinsje*. This cardamon fetches, on the average, two or three shillings per lb. The Cannanore species is rounder in shape, and more pleasant to the taste. Its price rises annually, as it is much in request with the English, and at present amounts to 100 ducats per kandy. The Company's demand is fluctuating, but the average quantity sold amounts to 20,000 or 30,000 lbs.

The cardamom grows on long stalks which spring out of the earth, the pods hanging on them in long bunches, rather far apart. When the weather is dry, the cardamom is white; but if rain falls while it is ripening, the bark or rind becomes brown; it then easily bursts and the little kernels fall out and are picked up by the natives and sold, though at a much lower price, generally for a shilling and a half per lb. When the cardamom is gathered, the stalks are burnt in the field, the ashes being serviceable for manure. This cardamom is not sown, but the land produces it spontaneously, the roots spreading along and under the soil, like those of the reed. When the cultivators wish to make the roots sprout up, they take heavy rollers with which they press them into the soil. They generally suffer the ground to lie fallow for a year, and in the second year roll and manure it to make it produce fruit. I have enquired of the natives whether the seeds might not be sown, and new cardamom fields be made in this way; but they replied in the negative, saying that the seeds would indeed germinate, but the stem would not grow bigger and thicker than a needle, and would wither away of itself. From this it appears that this plant is indigenous to certain districts, and cannot be grown in any other. Supposing indeed the case were otherwise, it may be that the natives would not allow it: for it yields them much more profit than pepper does, especially at Cannanore.

In conclusion, I will mention the areca, the trade in which

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drying the seeds, as rain causes the seed vessels to split and otherwise injures them, and if kept too long in the sun their flavour becomes deteriorated. In Travancore they are chiefly procured from the high lands overlooking the Dindigal, Madura, and Tinnevelly districts. In these mountains the cultivators make separate gardens for them as they thrive better, if a little care and attention be bestowed upon them. Cardamoms are a monopoly in the Travancore State, and cultivators come chiefly from the British provinces, obtaining about 200 or 210 Rupees for every kandy delivered over to the Government. The average number of kandies for the years 1845-51 was about 300 kandies. H. D.

is carried on throughout nearly the whole of the East Indies.* You know of course enough of the appearance of this tree from books of travels, to be aware that its fruit springs out of its side, after having been for some time enclosed within a sort of rind, when the tree appears to be distended; till the fruit, having become hardy enough to brave the open air, bursts from its covering. You are also aware that throughout the East Indies this fruit is chewed, together with a leaf called *Betel* (a plant which grows like the pepper tree, and has similar leaves), a little lime being also mixed with it. It cleanses the mouth by its acridity, and makes the saliva blood-red; but when it is much indulged in, it corrodes the enamel of the teeth, so that they become black, with those who chew it in great quantities. The Areca serves the hindoos for dyeing, for which purpose quantities of it are dried and exported to Coromandel and Surat. The East India Company have made great efforts to appropriate to themselves the areca trade on this coast, but have not succeeded. But they have monopolized the trade in Ceylon, in spite of the dissatisfaction of the king of Kandy: and, I am told, gain 100,000 rix dollars yearly by it. In this country the natives traffic with it, and its price varies, the Kandy being worth sometimes 3½, sometimes 4 rix dollars. There are also different sorts of areca, the common sort, the scented sort, the white, and the red, among which consumers may purchase according to their taste.

May Heaven prosper commerce, the sinews of our State.

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* *Areca catechu.* (Linn). Its native place is unknown, but it is extensively distributed in India. It yields the betel nuts of commerce. They are much relished by the Natives, being chewed with the leaf of the betel pepper, (Chavica betel) spread with chunam. A tree will produce annually on an average three hundred nuts. They are one of the staple products of Travancore. The nuts are gathered in July and August, though not fully ripe till October. In the latter country, the nuts are variously prepared for use. Those that are used by families of rank, are collected while the fruit is tender; the husks on the outer pod is removed; the kernel, a round fleshy mass, is boiled in water; in the first boiling of the nut, when properly done, the water becomes red,—thick and starch like, and this afterwards evaporated into a substance like catechu; the boiled nuts being now removed, sliced and dried, the catechu like substance is rubbed to the same, and dried again in the sun, when they become a shining black, ready for use. Whole nuts without being sliced are also prepared in the same form for use amongst the higher classes, while ripe nuts, as well as young nuts in a raw state are used by all classes of people generally, and ripe nuts preserved in water with the pod are also used. When exported to other districts, the nuts are sliced and coloured with red catechu, as also the nut while in the pod. The average amount of exports of the prepared nuts from Travancore, is from 2 to 3,000 kandies annually, exclusive of the nuts in their ordinary state, great quantities of which are shipped to Bombay and other ports. According to the last survey, there were upwards of a million areca palms in Travancore. H. D.

# LETTER XXVII.

Description of the Cocoa Palm; the Malabar Cinnamon, and Coffee shrub—Sanctity of Cows and Snakes in the eyes of the Malabars—Great Snakes—Quantity of Crocodiles—Dangerous Kites—Fire-Flies.

When I reflect on the happy country life you lead, far remote from the turmoil in which most mortals are involved, your senses daily regaled with the sight of flowers and the scent of blossoming forests, pleasant tracts of clover field lying before you with dew drops like diamonds hanging on every blade and leaf, my heart is filled with sadness at the contrast afforded by the dreary meadows inhabited by noxious monsters, that surround me. But as there are novelties to be met with among the animals and vegetables here, which are unknown in the Netherlands, I hope you will not find it irksome if I give you some account of the most remarkable that occur to me.

The cocoa palm, which is the most useful of all trees to man, adorns the shores of Malabar with its lofty crown. It would be tedious to repeat all that has been said of its excellencies, for there is no part of it which is not serviceable for some purpose or other. It appears to thrive best under the influence of the cool sea breeze and near the salt waters of the sea; for, in more inland situations it is found to languish. It seems also as though it delighted in human society, being much fresher and more fruitful in the neighbourhood of houses than in retired places.

The Creator, whose wisdom is apparent in all His works, would seem to have bestowed especial thought on this tree. The long slender trunk, laden at the top with fruit, he has provided with a multitude of fibres which take root on all sides in the soil, thereby enabling the tree to withstand the blasts of the wind. The bark is enveloped in a kind of tissue, which some of the natives make into cloaks. The fruit yields water for the thirsty, food for the hungry, oil for culinary purposes and fuel for the lamp. If you wish to extract wine from it, you must make an incision in the

top of the tree, and hang vessels round it; and from the wound there gradually drops a liquid which would otherwise have circulated into the fruit. But now mark the wonderful change which this liquid undergoes. At first, it is sweet and rather nasty and as mild as our whey; but it soon becomes strong enough to cause intoxication: vinegar, and sugar of a brown and clayey sort, may also be made from it. This liquid is a profitable article of commerce to the Company. At Batavia they distil from it a beverage as strong as brandy, which is mixed with brown sugar and called arrack: this is sent to all parts of India, and brings in a good revenue. The upper end of the trunk of the cocoa palm is soft, and when the bark is opened a sort of pith of a white hue is found inside, called *Palmyt*, soft and delicious to the taste, and not unlike the cauliflower: but, what is chiefly remarkable to a naturalist, in this part is found the germ of the fruit and its shoots, neatly enclosed in a tube or sheath.

I shall give you no description of the pineapple, jack fruit, mango, cashew nut, and other Malabar fruits. All books of travels abound in plates and descriptions of them. But it is right to remark that the cinnamon is found here: not the fine, pleasant, species which grows in Ceylon, but a wild species, having a rough, thick bark, like that of the *China-China*, and a strong disagreeable flavour. The root of this tree is fit for yielding oil, and the oil which is procured from the rind is at first red, but gradually decomposes and settles down into a kind of camphor. The natives use this cinnamon in cookery, and as it is very cheap, costing less than a stiver per pound, there is no demand here for the better kind. The English contrive to sell this Malabar cinnamon in an underhand way in other places.

The coffee shrub is planted in gardens for pleasure, and yields plenty of fruit which attains a proper degree of ripeness. But it has not the refined taste of the Mocha coffee. An entire new plantation of coffee shrubs has been laid out at Ceylon, with what success, time will shew. If it thrive, great advantage no doubt will accrue to the East India Company, who will not thus be compelled to purchase such quantities from Mocha, where the price is very high and continually rising on account of the concourse of European traders from all parts, while for the same reason the value of the European and Indian wares brought there, is greatly diminished.

This country of Malabar, though mountainous in the interior, contains but little mineral wealth, except iron, which is not expensive here, and is exported to Mocha after being beaten out in small bars. The natives make their firelocks of this metal, and their swords likewise, though they prefer cutlasses of European workmanship. The loadstone is very cheap here. You can get it for 1*s.* per lb. But whether it is found here, or, as some have told me, is brought from the Maldives, I cannot positively say.

And now to pass on to the subject of animal life. You have heard perhaps that animals are esteemed holy among the Malabars, a coincidence with, or possibly an imitation of, the superstition of the ancient Egyptians, among whom the slaughter of a cow was reckoned a heinous crime. A rajah, when he mounts the throne, must take an oath to protect cows, brahmins and women. They cannot comprehend how we, Europeans, can be so cruel as to kill an animal which yields milk and butter for man's sustenance. Therefore the places where cows are slaughtered are looked upon as unholy, and whenever they can prevent the act they do so. Among themselves any one who kills a cow is held guilty of murder, and though the murder of a man may be expiated by the payment of a sum of money, mercy is not easily extended to the crime of cow-killing. It is true that cows are daily brought into the town of Cochin which have been stolen by christians belonging to the Company's jurisdiction, and we are obliged to wink at this practice, or punish the robbery, if discovered, by only a slight fine, or otherwise we should have to go without meat altogether.

It is not a little remarkable and must be ascribed to the wise decrees of Providence that although beef is prohibited to all natives and to christians living under native rule, yet the number of cows does not greatly increase.

When a native is dying he takes hold of the tail of a cow which is brought alive to his bed-side: and some imagine that by doing this they are conducted to heaven. Thus the cow's tail serves much the same purpose to them, as wax tapers to the members of the Romish church, and in place of Holy water, they take cow dung, and spread it on their benches, floors and stairs, believing that the evil spirit cannot make his way over it to do them harm. They use this substance also in their purifications.

If a cow happens to die, the hide is stripped off by a certain caste or race, who are held in much the same low esti-

mation with them, as flayers are among us. As the natives do not wear shoes, these skins are sold to the Company, a bundle or 20 pieces for 16 stivers; and they are sent to Ceylon where they are used for packing cinnamon.

There are great quantites of snakes here. Not only do they infest woods and fields, but they get into towns and houses also. We lose our fear of them in a great measure, from habit, but there is no doubt that they are very poisonous, and will kill a person who accidently treads upon them. Otherwise, they rather try to escape from us. The natives esteem them as almost divine, and hold their lives sacred. The cobra capella is the most reverenced. Its head is flat, broad and arched, and on its back is a figure resembling a pair of spectacles. The natives perform their *Sombaien*, or obeisance, to these snakes, and keep a bit of their gardens partitioned off in honour of them, and for the chance of their arrival. They burn a lamp, and place a dish of rice in these enclosures once a year. To such an extent do they carry the superstition, that whenever they find a dead cobra capella, they consider themselves bound to burn its body with a small piece of sandalwood, a grain of gold pearl dust, corals, &c., using the samé ceremonies as at the burning of a person of one of the high castes. The European soldiers and sailors sometimes turn this custom to their own account: first they kill a snake and then sell it for a fanam or two to the superstitious Canarese, who buy it for the sake of giving it a good funeral. The cobra capellas are also used by the serpent charmers in their arts—they are taught to dance, being enclosed in separate baskets with which the charmers go about from house to house. In these dances they do not spring up on their tail, as travellers are wont to tell us, but merely twist themselves and raise the upper part of the body, which is no doubt their natural attitude when they sit upright, so that there is nothing marvellous in it. Moreover their poison has been carefully extracted, by making them bite some hard material, in consequence of which the vessels in the mouth containing the venom are broken. When a snake moves in this manner, one man blows on an instrument whilst another holds the cover of the basket over the snake, which keeps striking at it with its mouth as though it would bite if it could. The charmers are sometimes cheated by these snakes, if they are incautious in their management, so that it has become a proverb among the Malabars, that "the Carnakken (men who ride on elephants) and snake-charmers seldom die

their natural death." When the dance is over they close the cover of the flat basket over the snake's head, and it creeps in of its own accord. In the mountains and remote jungles of this country there is a species of snake of the shape and thickness of the stem of a tree, which can swallow men and beasts entire. I have been told an amusing story about one of these snakes. It is said that at Barcelore, a chego had climbed up a cocoanut tree to draw toddy or palm wine, and as he was coming down, both his legs were seized by a snake which had stretched itself up alongside the tree with its mouth wide open, and was sucking him in gradually as he descended. Now, the Indian, according to the custom of his country, had stuck his *Teifermes* (an instrument not unlike a pruning knife) into his girdle, with the curve turned outwards: and when he was more than half swallowed, the knife began to rip up the body of the snake so as to make an opening, by which the lucky man most unexpectedly was able to escape.

Though the snakes in this country are so noxious to the natives, yet the ancient veneration for them is still maintained. No one dares to injure them or to drive them away by violence, and so audacious do they become, that they will sometimes creep between people's legs when they are eating, and attack their bowls of rice, in which case retreat is necessary until the monsters have satiated themselves and taken their departure.

The crocodiles or caymans also abound here, and are venerated by the Malabars. They are not so large or dangerous as those of Java. Most of the tanks and ponds of Malabar contain these animals, and they are found likewise in marshy places. They abound in the rainy season, when the plains are filled with water. I have myself seen six or seven of them in the short space between the town and the Company's gardens, about half an hour's distance. They are not very mischievous on dry land, but in the water they are more dreaded, as they occasionally drag a person down.

The tiger and elephant are so well known that I need not describe them here. I should mention however that in the fine season a certain species of kite is found here which I have never met with elsewhere. It is of an ugly red colour, furnished with sharp claws with which it snatches pieces of meat from a window, or fish and other eatables from men's hands or basins as they go up the streets, and then flies away with its booty. Though so much given to thiev-

ing, kites do great good within the town, acting as scavengers for the natives, who are by no means so neat in their habits as the people of Holland and Friesland. During the war of 1716 and 1717, they followed the army, finding abundant food to satisfy their hunger.

A little insect called the fire-fly is found in India; it is very small in size, and emits a bright sparkling light, which can be seen glittering at a distance in the evening. A species of bird resembling our sparrow, which builds very peculiar nests in the shape of a sheath, is endowed by nature with the power of attracting these insects, as if for the purpose of obtaining their light in its nest. The substance which emits the light is situated in the extremity of the insect's body, which in day-light, or after death, is as white as wax; if the insect's mouth is pressed, so as to hinder its respiration, the light is dimmed, but it shines out again brighter than before as soon as the pressure is removed.

FINIS.

## AN ACCOUNT OF TRAVANCORE,

AND

## FRA BARTOLOMEO'S TRAVELS IN THAT COUNTRY.

It is a pleasing variety amid the more solid literature of this utilitarian age, to turn occasionally to those agreeable and unpretentious narratives which pourtrayed the position, opinions, and hopes of the European in India, sixty years since. Such accounts of our earliest introduction into these countries, have a value far beyond the mere interest they excite as books of travel or adventure. They give us an opportunity of comparing the great strides which civilization in her onward course is making in the gorgeous East,—and they afford testimony to the fact that the barrier of Eastern exclusiveness, prejudice and caste, is not altogether so formidable that it may not eventually be overthrown; while at the same time, they give no slight encouragement to the future, that in spite of the boasted immutability of heathen customs so perseveringly upheld by creed and habit, the fiat has gone forth to graft upon the effete and time-worn institutions of Hindustan, the civilization of the Western world. The stories of Eastern travel are very numerous, both in the Dutch, Portuguese, and English languages. One of the earliest perhaps in our own tongue is the fictitious narrative of Sir John Maundevile, and another is the lively and curious volume left us by Marco Polo; but their accounts are more marvellous than true. We may derive more profit and pleasure from the graphic tomes of Bernier, whose description of the Court of the Great Mogul; and the wild and wondrous scenes he was witness of, in those, the palmiest days of the princely city of Delhi, are well worthy of perusal. Other volumes of less note, but containing much valuable information about the particular territories where their authors sojourned or passed through, are also of considerable interest, even at the present day. Such are the travels of Thevenot, Terry, Grose, Tavernier,

Hamilton, Valentyn, and other literary pioneers of Eastern voyages and adventure. We may perhaps afford to smile at some miraculous stories which their credulity accepted indiscriminately from their native narrators. But this is a weakness not quite obliterated in our own days, and we accept their labours, as those of honest and worthy travellers, who have left upon the whole faithful and interesting records of unanglicised India.

Among the minor authors whose works have not earned such a reputation as those above enumerated, but which are not the less valuable, is that of Fra Paolino de San Bartolomeo, a bare-footed Carmelite, who was thirteen years in India, and resided chiefly on the Malabar Coast, and who a great part of that time dwelt either in Travancore or the neighbouring territory of Cochin. During the course of his travels, he imparts much curious and interesting matter about those two countries. His work was originally written in Italian, and published after the return of the author to Europe at Rome, in 1796. Bartolomeo had much of his time occupied in missionary affairs in Travancore, which gave him an opportunity of describing the manner and customs of the people. This latter country lies in the remotest corner of Hindoostan, and includes a small strip of territory, between the ghauts and the sea, the extreme length from its northern boundary, to Cape Comorin, measuring about 174 miles; its breadth averaging to about 48 miles; and the total area amounting to a little more than 6,500 square miles. Of this, one-third consists of mountain land, and impenetrable forests uninhabitable by man, the remaining two-third only being available for cultivation.

Its natural scenery partakes of that singularly fresh and verdant character peculiar to the other parts of the Western coast. The heavy periodical rains prevailing with but slight intermission, for nine months in the year give birth to a profuse vegetation. The magnificent line of ghauts on its Eastern boundary is singularly beautiful and attractive, at times rising abruptly in bare and rocky peaks, and now covered from the foot to the summit with dense and pathless forests, and overhanging the low plains from the heights of 5,000 to 6,000 feet above the sea level. The Travancore group of mountains thus presents a striking analogy to the island of Ceylon in position and outline. The main chain runs eastward for 150 miles to Cape Comorin with occasional deep depressions, and terminates in a bold precipitous mass

3,000 to 4,000 feet high within three miles of the cape itself. The Travancore mountains are loftiest at the extreme north of the district, where they stretch east and west for sixty or seventy miles, separating the districts of Dindigul and Madura, and rising into peaks of 6,000 to 7,000 feet, which overhang the plains of Coimbatore; and they retain an elevation of 5,000 to 6,000 feet, throughout their extent to the southward. They are generally very precipitous; and undulating, or rounded grassy ridges seem to be of common occurrence at 6,000 to 7,000 feet. But one of the most important features in this country, and one which must add materially to its wealth and prosperity is the extensive backwater, the name given to an inlet from the sea, which runs in a direction parallel to the coast, and varying both in width and depth, and maintaining a course of nearly 175 miles from Trevandrum to Chougliaut on the borders of the Cochin territories. The facilities here offered to water communication from one end of the country to the other, are incalculable; and now that the only remaining obstacle is about to be overcome by piercing through an intervening belt of high land a mile or two long, a line of uninterrupted water transit will be opened from the extreme northern districts to the capital itself, and thence to Cape Comorin. The canals which have hitherto been dug in order to connect the backwater as one grand whole were completed many years since by an able and energetic Dewan, Vencatta Row, who projected and completed during his administration, two canals measuring in length upwards of seventeen miles, which including four bridges cost about two lacs of Rupees. These two canals bear the name of Her Highness the Ranee of Travancore, whose reign is still gratefully praised and remembered by her faithful subjects.

Of the actual history of the country, the following are a few brief outlines. In ancient times there reigned over the extensive kingdom of Malabar, a king renowned for his talents and virtues, and who was a just and beneficial ruler. His name was Cheruma Perumal, and previous to his death, which occurred after a reign of 48 years, he divided his country into four grand divisions of which Travancore was one. Like Charles V, the aged monarch, weary of the cares of state, retired to console his declining years, with religion and solitude, and taking up his abode within the precincts of a sacred pagoda in the Cochin territory, died full of years A. D. 352. A mussulman tradition relates that he became an apostate from the faith of his

fathers, and, embracing mahomedanism, made a pilgrimage to Mecca, where he ended his days. The story rests probably upon no good foundation. But whatever may have been the fate of this king, the Malayalum empire terminated with his reign; and from that time there is a hiatus in Travancore history, over which many centuries have thrown the veil of obscurity.* Of the descendants of the famous Cheruma Perumal, we have but a bare list of the name of thirty-two sovereigns immediately preceding the present rajah. Of the acts or virtues of these royal worthies we possess but little or no information. In the 16th century the neighbouring province of Madura was a flourishing country, and Travancore was then a dependency on that State. And the earlier princes had their origin from Madura, whose Court was long considered both powerful and influential.

Their downfall may be dated from the incursion of the Mahrattas about the middle of the 18th century; at which time it is most likely that Travancore, taking advantage of the anarchy that prevailed in that state, separated itself from their dominion, and became an independent kingdom. At that time Palamcottah was a city belonging to the Travancore Government, though the boundary line has been considerably reduced since those days. In 1742, when Mahomed Ally khan ruled over the Madura and Tinnevelly provinces, and was in alliance with the English, he frequently made inroads into Travancore, for the purpose of exacting pecuniary supplies from the country. In these lawless transactions he was instigated by the English, who were then rapidly acquiring their indirect conquests over the southern provinces of the peninsula. The border district of Tovala was then the object of the rapine of the soldiers of Mahomed Ally's army. It was through that district that they threatened more than once to push their unjust excursions; and at one period the minister of Travancore was glad to purchase their retreat by the payment of a large sum of money, professedly to be paid to the English Government. These may be considered the first transactions of

* It appears certain that the brahmins were the original possessors of the country, and that their sway ended about 68 B. C. Subsequently the monarchy became elective and continued so for about 400 years, the term of 12 years being allotted for the reign of each prince. On the death of Cheruma Perumal, the last of these elective kings, the country was divided among his sons; and from them the reigning rajahs claim their descent.

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the English with Travancore, at least to the southern portion of it.*

In 1755, Travancore became possessed of the tract of country lying to the east side of the ghauts, and extending from Cape Comorin to Calcaud; having purchased it from Moodemiah one of the race of those turbulent polygars who at that time over-ran the district of Tinnevelly. The possession of this slice of territory was productive of many disturbances between the troops of the Rajah of Travancore and those native chiefs who were dependent on, or in the actual pay of the English. The province of Tinnevelly was for long the scene of much petty warfare, and the reduction of the polygars and other independent chieftains who resided in those districts, gave frequent occupation to the British troops. The arrival of colonel Heron at Tinnevelly which took place soon after the Travancorians took possession of their new district, so alarmed the troops who were placed for its defence; that they abandoned the fortress of Calcaud, and left the neighbouring country to the mercy of the English, who despatching Maphuz Khan with a small force, soon reduced the inhabitants to subjection without any fighting. On the return, however, of the English to Trichinopoly, the Travancorians assisted by the Palitover of the district of Nellitangeville, attempted to retake the disputed district. Maphuz Khan having collected together a small force marched to meet them: an action took place near Calcaud—the troops of Maphuz Khan were defeated, and the Travancorians and their allies sat down before the fortress. But on hearing of the advance of Maphuz Khan with a fresh force, the Travancorians suddenly abandoned the siege, and returned to their own country. In September, however, of the same year, another fresh force marched from Travancore, defeated the troops before Calcaud and retook possession of the district. The inhabitants of these districts were repeatedly in the habit of making inroads into the Tinnevelly country for the purpose of seizing the harvest, and they would probably have incurred the displeasure of Mahomed Hoossein on this account, who was then at the head of all the forces in the Tinnevelly country, had not a dispute arisen between the Rajah of Travancore and the Polygar

* About fifty years previous to this, Travancore was split up into numerous petty principalities, whose chieftains were constantly living in a state of warfare among themselves. The chief of them were Naugenaud, Tiroovencode, Ellavelloornaad, Kayencolum, Vemboonaud, Paravoor, Eddapully; and these again were divided by smaller states ad infinitum.

of Vedagherry, whose fortress was about fifteen miles north of the district of Shencottah, and thirty miles from Calcaud; and whose subjects had made continued predatory excursions into the Travancore country through the Arungole pass. With the view of punishing the polygar, the rajah of Travancore made common cause with Mahomed Esoph, and at a conference held between them it was agreed that the rajah should not any longer permit his people to ravage the Tinnevelly country, and that they both should march a force to reduce the refractory polygar of Vedagherry. The combined forces assembled at Shencottah, the rajah of Travancore having brought from 10 to 12,000 men through the Arungole pass. An action ensued, which ended in the total defeat of the polygar, who escaped in the night, and became a fugitive in the neighbouring district of Palitover. Soon after this the rajah of Travancore demanded again the cession of the Calcaud districts from Mahomed Esoph, which after much hesitation were permanently made over to him,—the annexation being approved of by the English government. Another action which took place subsequent to the transaction was at Vashinellore, where the Travancorians and Mahomed Esoph having again united, they laid siege to that fortress; after a series of attacks on both sides, the troops of the Palitover were victorious; and Mahomed Essoph withdrawing his forces from the siege, the Travancorians also returned to their own country through the Arungole pass.

Previous to the military affairs which took place between the Travancorians and the English on this side, certain events occurred in the northern part of the kingdom, which in their results gradually extended the power and authority of the Rajah of Travancore.

About 1760, the kings of Cochin were still independent, and had several tributary princes scattered over the southern part of their territory; among these was one called Cungaceri, and it was in 1764, that the Rajah of Travancore suddenly attacked his territories, defeated him and his allies in several decisive engagements: and then advanced to a place called Aricootty about 10 miles from Cochin, laid siege to, and took it, and having conquered the greater part of the country, and stripped the rajah of Cochin of two-thirds of his territory, bequeathed his newly won dominions to his nephew Ramah Vurmah, who ascended the musnud in the 24th year of his age. This Rajah's name was Vunjee Baula Rama Vurma Kolashayara Perumal, who appears to have

been a more ambitious character, than his predecessor, and early gave signs of being affected by the grasping habit of annexation to the great annoyance and alarm of the neighbouring chieftains, who betrayed no relish for being absorbed by the more powerful state. But Vunjee Baula was a determined man whose lust of conquest was not to be thwarted by the lawful protests of his feudatory chiefs, and one by one the power of the latter became extinguished, and their countries annexed in due form. Even Cochin itself appeared to have been threatened by this unscrupulous prince. King Perumpadapil was then reigning at Cochin. But when these petty kings were subdued and deprived of their territories by the Commander-in-Chief of the king of Travancore, the celebrated Marthanda Pulla and his successor, general Eustachius de Lannoy, by birth a Fleming, a treaty was concluded with king Perumpadapil, in consequence of which he was left in possession of the few places above mentioned, as the last remains of royal dignity. This happened in the year 1761. (Bart p. 135—6.)

We must now follow Bartolomeo in the personal narrative of his adventures before proceeding with the history.—"I formed an acquaintance," he says, with M. de Lannoy at Carriapulli in the year 1777.* He drove Samuri on the other side of the river from Allangatta and Codumgalur; assigned a small spot to the king of Cochin for his support; made himself master of all the fortresses, put the king's troops on the same footing as the European; divided among them the conquered lands; caused them frequently to march through the country with full military parade in order to keep the people in subjection to their rulers, and after Vira Marthanda's death, gave the kingdom, in which perfect tranquillity was now restored, to the present sovereign Rama Varmer, who had just entered the twenty-fourth year of his age. Thus ended the dominion of the petty Malabar sovereigns; thus was humanity avenged, and thus were crimes

* M. Eustathius de Lannoy was a military adventurer in the rajah of Travancore's service. He constructed the fort of Oodeagherry, where his tomb may still be seen in the ruined chapel inside the fort, now over-grown with jungle. It bears this inscription :—

"Hic jacet Eustathius Benedictus de Lannoy qui tanquam dux generalis militiæ Travancotidis præfuit ac per annos XXXVII fermé summâ felicitate regi inserviit, cui omnia regna ex Caiamcolum usque ad Cochin vi armorum ac terrore subjecit. Vixit annos LXII menses V et mortuus est die I Junii MDCCLXXVII.

Requiescat in pace."

His son was killed in an excursion into Madura.

punished, and the licentiousness suppressed, by which this country had been distracted ever since the tenth century. The military forces of the present king of Travancore consists of 50,000 men, disciplined according to the European manner, and 100,000 Malabar Nairs and Chegos, armed with bows and arrows, spears, swords and battle axes.

He keeps two valia sarwadi carryacarers, the vadakamugum, and the Tekmugum, one of whom is established on the north, and the other in the south. Each of these has under him four other officers, called only sarwadi carryacarer; these have inspection over four subalterns or carryacarer, and these subalterns have under them praverthecarer, ciandracarers, and toracarer; or collectors of the taxes, overseers and judges. The troops are always marching up and down, through the country to change their cantonments, to enforce the collection of the taxes, and to preserve peace and tranquillity. Public security is again restored throughout the whole country; robbery and murder are no longer heard of; no one has occasion to be afraid on the highways; religious worship is never interrupted; the people may rest assured, that on every occasion, justice will be speedily administered.

The present king has caused several canals to be constructed in order to unite different rivers with each other, and with the sea. By his desire also a very beautiful road has been completed between Cape Comorin, and Cudungalūr, so that in the course of 24 hours he may be informed of every thing that takes place throughout his whole dominion. After deducting the expenses of government, his yearly income may amount to half a million of rupees, arising from trade, duties, and various kinds of fines. One half of this revenue is deposited in the royal treasury; and never touched, but in cases of the utmost necessity.

The king as well as all the other pagan Indians, the chief men even not excepted, live according to the manner of the Pythagoreans, and use no other food than rice, milk, fruits and herbs. He generally wears a turband of a dark blue silk, and long white robe fastened at the breast with a string of diamonds; long wide drawers of red silk, and shoes, the points of which are bent backwards, like those of the Chinese. A sabre is suspended from his shoulders; and in the blue girdle bound round his loins, is stuck a poniard or persian dagger, which can be used either for attack or defence. When he shows himself to the people in full state,

he is attended by 5,000 or 6,000 men, together with a great number of palanquins and elephants. At the head of the procession is a band of musicians, and two court poets, who celebrate in songs his great achievements; he is borne in a palanquin, and the principal gentlemen of his Court must walk on each side of it. In my timo he was very much attached to Catholic Missionaries. As often as he passed by the parsonage house at Anjengo, where I resided two years, he always sent two of the gentlemen of his bed-chamber to inquire after my health."

During the course of his travels, Bartolomeo had several opportunities of becoming acquainted with the manners and customs of the people of Malayala, and his book contains accounts of several interesting interviews he had with the reigning prince of the country. Having procured letters of introduction from M. Adrian de Moens the Dutch Governor of Cochin, and Mr. John Forless, Governor of Anjengo, who both professed acquaintance with the Rajah; Bartolomeo set out from the former place for Trevandrum, on the 20th of June, 1780, previously acquainting tho minister of his intended visit, the object of which was connected with certain missionary affairs, into which it is needless to enter, in this place. Taking with him according to established etiquette a few presents consisting of two European paintings, a large mirror, fifteen pounds of red sandal wood, and twelve bottles of Persian rose water, he arrived at the Court, when as he relates; "As soon as we made our appearance before the gate of the Castle, the guard presented his arms, and the minister sent a guide to conduct the persons who bore our palanquin to the door of the Palm-garden in which the King resided. Here our coolies or palanquin-bearers, were obliged to remain behind us, lest, being people of the lowest caste, they might contaminate the Royal-palace. At this door we were received by the King's Commander-in-Chief, who conducted us through the Palm-garden, to a second door, where the King was waiting for us. He received us standing and surrounded by a great number of princes and officers. Near him stood his son, with a drawn sabre in his hand; in a shady place were three chairs, one of which was destined for the King, and the other two for me and my colleague. When we had all taken our seats, tho attendants formed a circle around us. I then produced the Pope's letter, which I had hitherto carried in a pocket-book richly embroidered according to the

eastern manner; raised aloft, applying it to my forehead, in order to show my respect for the personage in whose name, I presented it, and delivered it to Sampradi Keshwapulla, the Secretary of State. The latter handed it to the King, who also raised it up, and held it to his forehead as a token of respect for his holiness. At the moment when the Pope's letter was delivered there was a general discharge of the cannon of the castle. * * *

"When the King had conversed for some time on various topics, he ordered his Minister and Secretary to give such an answer to our petition and such relief to our grievances which had been specified on an Ola, that we might return home perfectly satisfied and easy. For my part I could not help admiring the goodness of heart, affability, and humanity of this prince, as well as the simplicity of his household establishment and way of life. At that time, he and all the persons of his Court, according to the Malabar mode, had nothing on their bodies, but a small piece of cloth fastened round the loins, and the only mark of distinction by which royal dignity could be discovered, was a red velvet cap with gold fringes."

Highly gratified at so courteous a reception by the Rajah, Bartolomeo remained a few days at the capital, during which time His Highness appointed a Brahmin to serve him in the capacity of house-steward together with another official, who daily brought him a service of dishes prepared after the Malabar manner and which were paid for out of the Royal treasury. The Rajah evinced a great desire to become more familiarly acquainted with the English language, already speaking it exceedingly well. For this purpose he endeavoured to retain Bartolomeo a still longer time at his Court, but such a proceeding was by no means palatable to the Brahmins who did not relish the favour with which the European Missionary was being received, and they covertly procured his removal from the country. But the cause which Bartolomeo had at heart was neither stifled nor discouraged by this abrupt termination of his visit. He had acquired even during that short interview, some rights he claimed for his Christian flock, who were being treated with injustice by the native officials of the district; and he had a verbal assurance from the Rajah, that he would take under his protection the missionaries and Christians in general, who had been recommended to him by His Holiness.

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Pope Clement the XIV, must have been rejoiced at the urbanity, and complaisance of a heathen prince. The next step was to send him out his own portrait, at the receipt of which the Rajah expressed the utmost satisfaction. The bearer of the papal gift received a douceur of 100 Rupees; and Bartolomeo concludes cheerfully, with the hope that henceforth Christianity will acquire new strength, and be again raised to its former state of respectability.

The eighth chapter of the book is entirely devoted to missionary affairs; the schisms and quarrels of both priests and people, besides some brief accounts of the rites and ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church practised in those parts. The chief disturbances appear to have risen on the side of the Cathanars, whom the Roman Catholic Church wished to bring into the bosom of its own Church. The Cathanars, for so are the Syrian priests called, are at all times a refractory set of persons, and the present race appears to keep up the same turbulent attitude towards foreign Christians as its predecessors. Talking of the clerical disturbances, Bartolomeo says, "they are to be ascribed chiefly to their Cassanars or priests; for these men, who are both ignorant and proud, excite the people and encourage them to rebel against the Bishop and Missionaries. Had these native priests sufficient learning; were they in any degree acquainted with their duty; and did they know, how to procure from the Pagans the least respect, they might certainly be fit to be entrusted with the care of Christian congregations: but unfortunately they are strangers to these qualities, live like the irrational animals, and by these means, are the cause that their parishes are converted into dens of thieves. * * *

"These Cassanars were the cause also of the schism, which took place in 1653. In the year 1709, they had an intention of uniting themselves with the schismatic bishop. In 1773, they declared themselves under the jurisdiction of the Bishops of the Latin or Western Church: but in 1777, they sent a request to Rome, that they might be allowed to have bishops of their own nation. In the year 1787, they made themselves independent of the apostolic vicar; but as I went to the Court of the king of Travancore, as well as to Cochin, in favor of the bishops and missionaries, the rebels were punished and again brought under subjection."

Bartolomeo reckons the number of Roman Catholics in his days in Malabar at 100,000, and alludes to conversion

as progressing most rapidly. In two years (1780-81) he confirmed above 20,000 persons. In the census taken in 1854, there were 81,886 Romo-Syrians, 109,123 Syrians, 1,737 East Indians in Travancore alone. But these figures can hardly be depended on as giving a very correct return of the number of native converts. The Syrians it will be observed are the most numerous. Their history is full of interest. Impatient as ever of control or amalgamation with other Christian sects, they possess with all their ignorance and obduracy, a monument of vitality and progress strangely in contrast with other Christian sects. We see above how the Roman Catholics failed to bring them into their fold, and similar attempts by the Protestant missions have ended in equal failure. The first attempt at regenerating their Church, and bringing them back from the barbarism to which years of isolation and neglect had reduced them, was made at the time when Colonel Macaulay was British Resident of Travancore. It was then that the pious, noble-hearted, and energetic Buchanan strove to emancipate the fallen Syrians from that degradation and obscurity into which they had fallen.

These schismatics who lived in a place "five days' march through the woods which no European had yet visited," are the poor Syrians, and their locality,—described "as remote and situated in impenetrable forests where jungle fever and tigers abound," and before going to which Buchanan felt it prudent "to put his house in order,"—is the pleasant station of Cottayam, one of the most charming situations in the whole of Travancore. Here it was that Buchanan laid the basis of that intercourse with the Syrians that eventually resulted in their emancipation from the blind ignorance into which they had been so long precipitated. That the praise-worthy efforts to bring them over to the Protestant Church have in a measure failed, is not from want of any deficiency of zeal or perseverance on the part of those who embarked in so worthy a cause. All honour to those who strove so manfully in the cause of their fellow-creatures. It is more than consolation to feel that however short the aim may have fallen of its ultimate object, a vast deal of intelligence, education and moral good has been diffused among a stray flock, who before were wandering without a shepherd and sunk in indolence and sloth.

It was previous to Buchanan's [see his Christian Researches] visit that La Croze, a French Protestant, attempted

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to enquire into the state of the Syrian Churches in Travancore, and the result of his investigations will be found in his "Histoire du Christianisme des Indes," printed at La Hague, in 1724. A very ancient and admirable account of this long lost branch of the Church of Antioch may be seen in a small publication, entitled the "Syrian Church of India," written by Dr. Macbride and printed at Oxford, in 1856. We have not time here to enter upon its early History, but merely draw attention to its status in Travancore. "The kingdoms," says the author of this little pamphlet, "of Travancore and Cochin, in which they are settled, form a happy varied scene of hills covered with teak forests, and of rich vallies, which being well irrigated, retain even during the summer heats a perpetual verdure, and are suitable for rice cultivation. The range of southern ghauts separates this lovely landscape from the sandy plains of Tinnevelly, which produce scarcely any thing, but the tall branchless stems of the Palmyra tree. The peculiar feature of the country is the backwater, an inlet of the sea, which expands occasionally into a lake, and were it not for its marine hue, might be mistaken for a river, being continually bordered by trees. In the strip of land between it and the open sea are Cochin and Allepie, populous towns, and Goa still magnificent in its ruins, the capital of the Portuguese Indian empire. Into this backwater fall the many rock streams that issue from the ghauts." The reader may form some idea of the scenery from the following description by Mr. Tucker of the prospect from the site of the new college. "The eye rests with delight upon all the luxuriance of the richest and most varied forms of foliage; the thick clustering bamboo, the stately mast-like stem of the areca palm, with the pepper plant, climbing up it like ivy; the cocoanut bending over the river with its waving plumes, the sago palm, and talipot, the cassia, the lofty buttress tree, the teak, with the mango and cashewnut, in their season scenting the whole air in the bright fresh early morning with their fragrant blossoms; the mountains in the distance, and the open space of hill and dale immediately before us, and the Cottayam river winding round, leave an impression on my mind of peaceful beauty, fertility, and repose which years of turmoil and occupation have been unable to efface. Below, by the river's side, is the old college, built under the direction of Colonel Munro, picturesque, but inconvenient. On the higher ground stands the new college built by the society,

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with its chapel, library, lecture rooms, and apartments, forming three sides of a quadrangle. Near is a missionary house, gothic church and school, and printing office. Behind, and where the river passes out of sight, among the trees, stands out the upper Syrian church, with its elevated chancel, and lower down, the second Syrian and Roman Catholic Churches." Here it was that the mission of Buchanan to bring into union the Syrian and Protestant Churches first commenced its operations. An interesting conversation took place between Buchanan and the Syrian bishop on the subject. The bishop arguing that he would sacrifice much for union, only he must not be called upon to compromise the dignity and purity of his Church. Discussions on various points ensued. It was fortunate that such men as Macaulay and Munro were in those days the British Residents at the Court of Travancore, for the Rajah was much inclined to promote the welfare of his Christian subjects, and the British plenipotentiaries brought their powerful influence in aid of the good cause. Arrangements were made with the sanction of the reigning prince, for erecting a college at Cottayam for the educational training of the Syrian youth, and with the view of aiding also in the religious, and moral education of the Cathanars. The Church Missionary society established Cottayam as one of their future Mission stations. With such fair and hopeful beginnings it is painful to reflect, how sadly the result fell short of the promise. A combination of unforeseen difficulties and mishaps destroyed those hopes once so justly indulged in. "Whether it was from excess of prudence in missionaries which degenerated into the fear of man, and prevented a full exhibition of spiritual truth, or from the inaptitude of the students to comprehend their teaching, certainly the experiment must be admitted to have been a failure; for during this long period exceeding thirty years, there has been I believe no visible improvement, and no spiritual life imparted to the Syrian Church, and not one of these hundred and fifty students have relinquished a single unspiritual tenet or superstitious custom."

* * *

"Thus suddenly and abruptly did a bigoted and imperious priest, incapable of comprehending the Christian love and long forbearance of the missionaries, and alike insensible to the spiritual and temporal interests of his people, check as far as in him lay, their social improvement and

their growth in grace. A division of the property was made by arbitration, under the direction of the resident; and the college has been removed to a neighbouring hill. The principal is resident, the students are no longer exposed to the influence of their bigoted native teachers, the services of the Church of England are alone performed and the mission is now understood as designed for all, whether heathen, or of the corrupt Syrian or Roman Church who desire to embrace our reformed scheme of Christianity."

Returning from this digression to the history of the country, we find that for upwards of twenty years Travancore appears to have enjoyed a state of repose and tranquillity, while a constant scene of warfare was going on in those countries bordering on her mountainous territories. It was not until the growing power of Tippoo had assumed an aspect at once threatening and formidable that the Rajah of Travancore felt the importance of that defensive alliance which during the last years had been contracted between himself and the English. It was not only the lust of conquest that instigated Tippoo to undertake hostilities against the Rajah, but his religious bigotry and intemperate zeal for the diffusion of his favorite creed, animated him in this, as well as in many of his other expeditions. Like all self-made conquerors too, the very stability of whose throne depends upon a succession of fresh conquests, and constant employment for their soldiery, he felt the absolute necessity of making his name and power felt and acknowledged over the whole south of India. The possession of Travancore would add to his empire and his glory; and without a shadow of right, he at once made his plans for an attack upon that kingdom which had hitherto maintained its neutrality and independence. A pretext for his invasion was soon discovered. Hyder had reduced to vassalage the kingdom of Cochin, and it so happened that in several places the Cochin territory was intersected by that of Travancore, especially in the northern parts. Tippoo complained that he was unable to reach his own territories without passing through that of a foreign power, a difficulty increased on account of a wall which had been erected on the frontier, and which by enclosing parts of both territories acted as an obstacle to his progress through his own dominions. He moreover questioned the right of the Travancorians to the fort of Cranganore, and Ayacottah which they had purchased from the Dutch, and finally he

was irritated at finding that the country harboured numerous refugees who had fled from his persecution, and had sought an asylum amid the forests of this inaccessible country. With such flimsy pretences, Tippoo prepared for an invasion of the Rajah's dominions, and refusing to listen to the mediation offered by the English Government, he hastened at once to throw a powerful army upon the barrier lines. At first the resistance was slight, owing chiefly to the long extent of wall which required to be defended; and Tippoo by a feigned attack having gained an easy entrance, pushed his troops along the inside of the barrier in order to guard the principal gateway. The Travancorians however made many efforts to arrest his progress, and bravely defended themselves against the overwhelming numbers of the enemy. The Sultan had more than once to supply his falling troops by re-inforcements from the rear: and some confusion arising from the imperfect manner in which those orders were executed, and from the increasing confidence and resolution of the Travancorians, the troops of the Sultan began to give way. A panic at last ensued, and the front ranks falling back upon those in the rear, the whole mass gave way; and an indescribable scene of dismay and confusion arose. Tippoo himself was wounded, and reluctantly borne away by the retreating masses of his soldiery. He reached his camp with difficulty, after losing about two thousand of his men; and leaving his palanquins and several other articles belonging to himself in the hands of the conquerors. But this glorious success of the Travancorians was not of long duration, Tippoo stung by defeat and disaster hastened to retrieve his honor by a fresh attack, and with a more powerful army. Collecting a strong force of artillery, he again appeared before the hated walls, the scene of his late humiliation: at the same time professing his desire of peace to the English Government. Towards the beginning of April he commenced breaching the walls, which could not sustain the shock of his batteries for any long time: and the Travancore soldiers finding further resistance hopeless against the numbers and valour of the Mysoreans, retreated from the place leaving the country to the mercy of the Sultan. The latter over-ran a great part of the country, committing his usual outrages against the defenceless inhabitants: nor was it until the heavy rain set in, that he was compelled at last to retire from his work of devastation; and, leaving his hoped-for subjugation of Travancore, to grapple with a foe

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whose hitherto unforeseen powers eventually brought him and his empire into one common ruin.

The departure of Tippoo and his licentious soldiery, appears to have been the signal for a series of internal commotions and petty disturbances, which for many years kept the state of Travancore in agitation and disquiet. It may not be difficult to trace the course of this to those habits of lawlessness which the Travancorean soldiery must have contracted from their contact with the Mysorean troops. A limited degree of control and authority would increase the insolence of a half-disciplined force, like that which had retreated from the victorious army of Tippoo, and history is not wanting in examples to show the danger arising to a state from the presence of an armed force, whom the pride of recent victory or the sting of humiliating defeat, impels to a course of wanton violence and unbounded crime. A rule at once despotic and arbitrary which could not so much control as direct the passions of this unruly multitude of semi-disciplined troops would be the only remedy for the growing troubles and discontent of the country. Rama Vurmah who ascended the musnud in 1799, did not possess the ability to grapple with these difficulties which beset his throne, and the Court itself became at an early period the scene of much strife and bloodshed. Several of his Dewans or ministers were removed by violence or death, the effect of partisan influence, and animosity; and it was only by the timely interference of the British resident that a stop was temporarily put to such unwarrantable proceedings. A slight interval of tranquillity was soon succeeded by fresh disturbances. Some real or pretended grievances were put forth by the rabble troops which surrounded the throne: a temporary concession to their demands served only to increase their insolence; and as they were instigated in their acts by parties hostile to British influence, they became emboldened by success, which they probably attributed to timidity on the part of the Government. That this was one of the causes of the open revolt which subsequently took place there can be little doubt: at all events it gave confidence to men whose minds were previously imbued with discontent, and affected with long misrule, and who were prepared to take advantage of the first opportunity which gave hopes of a change which might ameliorate, as they imagined, their own condition or subvert British authority. In the subse-

quent insurrection that burst forth and which openly set the British power at defiance ; not only was the Dewan of Travancore deeply implicated, but even the Dewan of Cochin. Disputes at first arose between the Rajah and the Resident regarding the subsidy which had not been regularly paid by the Travancore state. On the side of the Rajah it was urged that the Company's troops entailed an additional burthen to the state which it was unable to bear ; that the treaty of 1805, had in a measure been extorted from him, and that the state had not the means of defraying the subsidy. On the other hand the Resident denied the allegation regarding the treaty, and pointed out to the Rajah that the Carnatic Brigade, a body of useless half-disciplined soldiers, was one of the sources of great loss of revenue to the state ; and an unnecessary burden ; and ended in recommending its being at once disbanded. Believing the Dewan Vailoo Thumby to be the Rajah's chief adviser in these plots against British authority, the Resident insisted upon his removal—an act in which the minister professedly acquiesced, but in the meantime he secretly inflamed the minds of the populace, and attempted to bring about an insurrection, the aim and object of which should be the assassination of the British Resident. Reports having reached the latter of the disaffection which prevailed in the country, and various rumours of the rising of the whole people having got abroad, the Resident felt the necessity of summoning military aid without delay ; and troops were immediately put in motion both from Trichinopoly and Malabar in order to quiet the rising insurrection. Anxious to strike a blow before the arrival of the Company's troops, the rumour of whose approach had now reached him, the Dewan on the night of the 28th of December, 1808, prepared in secret a party of armed men, who at his instigation, surrounded the house in Cochin where the Resident was then living. Aroused by their noise Colonel Macaulay appeared at the window when he was immediately fired at by the assassins, but happily without effect. Perceiving the danger which surrounded him he hastened to hide himself in a small room, pointed out to him by one of his own servants; which was undistinguishable from the outside; and here he remained concealed in safety during the whole night. Foiled in this atrocious attempt the assassins fled early next morning, their flight being somewhat hastened by the arrival of a vessel in the river, containing a portion of the troops which had been despatched

from Malabar. On board this vessel Colonel Macaulay took refuge.

On the landing of the reinforcements the troops at once commenced offensive operations under the command of Colonel Chalmers then at the head of the force at Quilon. Proceeding to Paroor, a town midway between Quilon and Trevandrum, he made a successful attempt to dislodge the enemy from that situation. The Nairs though far exceeding in numbers the handful of British troops, fled in confusion, leaving several guns behind them. Soon after this, information was received that large bodies of the enemy, one from the north, and the other from the south, were marching rapidly towards the scene of the late contest, and Colonel Chalmers therefore deemed it prudent to withdraw into the cantonment at Quilon, and remain upon the defensive, until further reinforcements should join him.

Fresh troops having accordingly arrived early in January, Colonel Chalmers moved out to attack the enemy, which was commanded by the Dewan in person, and which amounting to about 30,000 men with 18 guns, was advancing towards Quilon by rapid marches. The engagement was of short duration; in less than five hours the insurgents were totally defeated, leaving nearly all their Artillery, and a large number of slain on the ground.

Not discouraged by this failure, the Dewan turned his face towards Cochin, and investing that place, he made a vigorous attack by three separate columns. The small garrison commanded by Major Hewitt and which was composed of eight Companies of the 12th and 17th Madras Native Infantry, bravely defended the fort, and compelled the masses of the Dewan's soldiery to retire, with considerable loss, yet not without much severe and obstinate fighting; thus foiled in their attempt the insurgents raised the blockade, and retreated again towards the south.

The aspect of affairs now called for a more vigorous interference on the part of the English Government. A fresh force was at once raised and directed to proceed to the southernmost portion of the Peninsula, in order to effect an entrance into Travancore through the pass of Arambooly, which was fortified by means of several redoubts, mounting two or three guns east and connected with a wall extending north to south for about two or three miles. These barriers were never very formidable and could never have long resisted the attacks of regular and disciplined troops.

The new force was commanded by Colonel St. Leger who arrived at the foot of the pass early in January. He determined to carry the place by surprise, especially as he was unaccompanied with a battering train. A night attack was resolved on, and Major Welsh being entrusted with its execution, the plan was in every way successful, and before daybreak next morning, the bastions were in the hands of the British, and the pass secured.

This vigorous and successful operation, led to the entire abandonment by the enemy of their defensive works in that quarter. Speedily following up this blow, Colonel St. Leger marched to Nagercoil, overcame a small body of troops posted to defend the passage of the river at that place; and finally sat down before Oodeagherry and Pulpunapooram, two forts in close proximity, at the foot of a small detached hill called the Vaily Mullay. The garrison of these fortresses did not wait for an attack, but fled abandoning their work, and their examples were followed by the insurgents in every direction. In the meantime the troops at Quilon, had again defeated the Nairs in a brilliant engagement under Colonels Picton and Stuart, who dispersed and utterly disorganised the rebel forces, and captured all their artillery. The British forces now being able to communicate with each other, gradually converged towards the capital. The Dewan fled to the jungles, and the Rajah alarmed at their near approach hastened to tender his submission to the British resident.

An interview was now held between the Rajah and the Resident, and by the conditions of a new treaty it was agreed that the Travancore Government should pay all arrears of the subsidy and the expense of the war; that the Carnatic brigade should be dissolved, and that the defence of the country should be hereafter entrusted to a subsidiary force, part of which was to be stationed at Trevandrum. Peace being then restored, the force was broken up, and the troops returned to their cantonments. A miserable fate awaited the Dewan; pursued from place to place, he lingered out a wretched existence among the mountain fastnesses, till at last his retreat being discovered, he was put to death by his own brother, or, some say, committed suicide to avoid his capture. His brother was seized and publicly executed at Quilon, while the corpse of the Dewan himself was conveyed to Trevandrum, and exposed to the insults of the populace,—a revengeful and unworthy act which most justly called

down the severe animadversion of the Supreme Government. By the fifth article of the treaty between the British Government and the State of Travancore drawn up in 1805, it was specifically provided that in case of the subsidy agreed upon to be annually paid to the former, falling in arrears, the British Government should be empowered to assume the management of the country. More than once had this treaty been broken; and on this occasion, the British Government proceeded (seeing no immediate remedy for the existing state of affairs) to carry into execution the new arrangement. At the time, Colonel J. Munro was appointed Resident—and he was at once authorized to assume the office of Dewan, and undertake the administration of the country: and this at the request, according to his own statement, of the Rajah himself. The measures he adopted were eminently calculated to restore the public tranquillity; and from an exhausted exchequer, a lamentable deficiency in the administration and want of justice, he succeeded not only in relieving the country of its debts, but in completely raising the finances to a state of more than their usual prosperity. Every department was re-organized, and most of the severe and burdensome taxes were lightened and repealed, and a foundation of order and quiet established throughout the country, which has never since been interrupted. It was not till the year 1814, that Colonel Munro, resigned his power as Dewan of the country. In the meantime, the Rajah had died, and had been succeeded by the Ranee, his sister: after a brief reign of 2 years, she was again succeeded by her sister, who assumed the regency of the country, till the youthful Rajah had attained his majority in 1829. This latter prince, after a reign of 18 years, was succeeded by Rajah Marthanda Vurmah, in 1846.

It may readily be supposed that a country like Travancore affords ample field for the researches of the botanist, and this is undoubtedly the case. Frequent as have been the explorers on the western coast in Canara, Malabar and Coorg, the high lands of Travancore and Cochin, have seldom been visited by the botanical traveller; and although, the larger portion of the Flora partakes of a character, resembling that of the neighbouring district; yet it is not improbable that some plants now considered peculiar to Ceylon, may be found on these mountains. Whatever may have been the faults of the administration of the Dutch East India Company, it is certain that they have at least

the redeeming qualities of not having neglected to promote the study of science, and the development of the national resources of the countries they settled in. Few subjects are deserving of greater attention than those which derive their value from being connected with the comforts and necessaries of human life. And the most attractive of all sciences, are those which lead in their results from every fresh discovery or application of principle to a permanent benefit in behalf of mankind. Among such we may look upon botany as taking the highest rank, and it is to the lasting praise of the Dutch, that their labours in the cause of science in India, were so zealous, and which entitle them to be ranked as the first pioneers in this field.

Bartolomeo devotes the whole of his eleventh chapter to the subject of the medicine and botany of this country. "India alone," he says, "contains more medical writings, perhaps, than are to be found in all the rest of the world. As printing has never been introduced here, all hands are employed in copying manuscripts, and particularly such as relate to the prolongation of human life, viz., medical and botanical. Those who wish to be convinced of the multitude of articles that occur in the medicine and botany of Malabar, need only recur to the work published at Amsterdam, in the year 1689, under the title of "Hortus Malabaricus." Both these sciences were cultivated in India, above three thousand years ago, and at present give employment to a great number of people. When a physician is sent for, you are sure to be visited by five or six. There are even boys, who possess an extensive knowledge of botany, and this is not surprising, as, from their earliest years, they are made acquainted with the nature of plants, and their different properties." To these remarks, succeed a catalogue of several medicinal plants, with their uses and properties, together with the vernacular names; and which, according to his own account, cost him an immense labour to collect. But he must have been greatly indebted to the industry of his Dutch predecessors, who a century before his time had been collecting plants, and illustrating with indefatigable labour the Flora of this coast.

Foremost in the ranks of these early Dutch botanists stands the name of the indefatigable Henricus Van Rheede, Governor of Cochin, who laid the whole country under contribution for his unequalled work in 12 folio volumes on the plants of the Western Coast. "The Hortus Malabaricus,"

says Evelyn "presents us with the most stupendous and unheard of plants in that elaborate work: the cuts being in copper, and certainly of any published the most accurate done, nor are they in their shape and description less surprising. [Evel. corresp. 1681]. In this work are contained 794 plates so accurately figured, that there is no difficulty whatever in identifying them. Then followed Rumphius, a Hanoverian, whose "Herbarium Amboinense" occupies six quarto volumes with nearly 780 plates. Hermann, whose labours were confined to Ceylon, his Museum Zeylanicum having been published in 1717, and his Flora Zeylanica in 1747, the two Burmanns, father and son, whose 'Flora Indica' and 'Flora Zeylanica' respectively are valuable repertories of Indian botanical knowledge. Kœnig was a Dane, Commelin, Klein, and Rottler were either Dutch or German. All honor then to the Hollanders who first laid the foundation of that edifice which the subsequent labours of Roxburgh, Wallich and Wight, have well nigh completed in the present century. Subsequent researches have rendered Bartolomeo's list of plants any thing but novel or valuable, though he says it cost him immense labour to collect the numerous catalogue of samples and to add their Malabar, Latin and Portuguese names. "The sources I employed," he says, "besides my own experience, are the dictionaries of Hanxleden, Viscoping and Pimental; the herbarium of Father Fraz and a M.S. containing observations by many regular physicians and botanists, natives of the coast of Malabar." Whatever may be the value of the learned treatises above referred to, we fear they are inaccessible to the student of the present day, who must content himself with mere recent and no doubt worthier books on the Flora of Malabar. The climate of Travancore is the same as in other parts of Malabar, and the following remarks by one of the most eminent of modern botanists* may be applied to this country. "From the humid character of the Malabar climate, its luxuriant vegetation might be inferred. Hamilton tells us that it resembles Bengal in verdure, but has loftier trees and more palms: the shores are skirted with cocoanuts, and the villages surrounded with groves of betelnut, palms and talipots. Vateria Indica, a noble dipterocarpous tree, is abundantly planted in many parts; cassia, pepper and cardamoms flourish wild in the jungles, and form staple products for

* Hooker and Thomson's Introductory Essay to the Indian Flora.

export. The fact that the pepper is cultivated without the screens used in other parts of India, to preserve a humid atmosphere about it, is the best proof of the dampness, and equability of the climate. The low valleys are richly clothed with rice-fields, and the hill sides with millets, and other dry crops, whilst the gorges and slopes of the loftier mountains are covered with a dense and luxuriant forest.

The mass of the Flora is Malayan, and identical with that of Ceylon, and many of the spices are further common to the Khasya hills, and the base of the Himalaya. Teak is found abundantly in the forests, but the sandalwood occurs only on the east and dry flanks of the chain. Oaks and coniferæ are wholly unknown in Malabar, but the common Bengal willow (Salix tetrasperma) grows on the hills. Gnetum and Cycas both occur, the former abundantly.

Of the deep depressions that intersect the Travancore range, and by which communications are kept up between the districts which it divides, that of Courtalum, in 9 degrees of north latitude, is a well-known botanical station, which, though on the eastern or Carnatic side, from its peculiar form and situation is under the influence of the southwest monsoon, and enjoys, together with the rest of the province, a deliciously cool and equable climate. Notwithstanding the perennial humidity, the rain-fall at Courtalum is only 40 inches; on the hills around, however, it is doubtless much greater. The Pulney or Pulnai mountains west of Dindigul, the Animalaya south of Coimbatore, the Shevaghiri mountains southwest of Madura, and the ranges near Courtalum, are all well-known as the scenes of Dr. Wight's indefatigable labours, which in this direction have extended to Cape Comorin itself.

There are few botanical features of Travancore not common to both Ceylon and Malabar in general. Nutmegs, coffee, and cinnamon flourish at Courtalum. The remarkable palm, Bentinckia, so common on its mountains, is however not known in Ceylon. The other palms are Caryota urens, an Areca, Phœnix farinifera, and one or two species of Calamus. The products of the forests are brought down at the proper season to the commercial depôt of the country at Allepie, a place which promises to be one of the most thriving and busy ports on the western coast. It is remarkable for the existence of an extraordinary bank of mud which is thrown up by some natural means in the open roadstead forming a complete

breakwater, and thereby affording a safe refuge for vessels at all seasons of the year.

Perhaps few places in Travancore are of greater interest if referred to byegone times than Anjengo, which was for many years, an English factory, now a ruin in a deserted locality. Those who are intimate with the attractive "Oriental Memoirs of Forbes," will recollect the lively description of a station where he passed so many of his days. Orme, the celebrated Historian was born here, and here lived Elizabeth Draper to whom Sterne addressed the famous "Letters to Eliza." A tombstone in the churchyard, records the burial here of the first British resident Jno. Toller, A. D. 1777.

Fifty years' continued tranquillity has doubtless conferred many great benefits on Travancore, and the naturally quiet disposition of the people has been perhaps as instrumental, as any other cause in leading them to enjoy, and appreciate the blessings of peace. The rapid spread of education among all classes, which has swept away many prejudices, and opened the paths of civilization to the people, has been the happy consequence of their long intercourse with Europeans. During several preceding reigns, the Rajahs appear to have been sensible of the advantages accruing to a more extended diffusion of knowledge among their subjects; and the Free School of Trevandrum has long maintained for itself a reputation, as one of the best institutions for the education of native youth in South India. With every advantage for communication with foreign countries, the march of improvement must steadily progress in this beautiful country; and a faithful and firm alliance with the British Government must be productive of that increasing prosperity it so richly deserves.

NOTE.—The following Extracts from Dr. Buchanan's letters to his friends on the subject of the Syrian Churches are so interesting that they deserve to be quoted in this place.

"The interesting scenes of the Christian Missions have lately obliterated from my mind the poor Syrians and Jews, although I am just on their borders; and being on the borders, I can get no information about them from the European. Every body refers me to Colonel Macaulay. I have read in French, since I left Pondicherry, La Croze's Christianity in India, a most admirable classical work. His chief subject is the inquisition at Goa, and the Syrian Christians; and his last pages are devoted to Ziegenbalg. He expresses a hope that some persons will be

sent from Europe on an embassy to the Syrian Christians, to enquire concerning their state, learning, and religion after so long an interval.

"Joachim at Anghoor told me I should find them in five days' march through the woods from Travancore palace; he callsd them schismatiques, whom no Europeau or Romish priest had evsr visited.

Again, "From Trevandrum I went to Poontara on the sea-coast; and here I first saw a Syriau Church in ths Romish communion. I mean in Travancore; for I before mentioned to you that I had visited one near Trichinopoly. From Poontara to Anjsngo I travelled by the sea-coast, and had ths pleasure to see a Church every four or fivs miles, From Cape Comorin to Cochin, there are about a hundred Churchss on ths sea-shore alone. Of these, ths chief part ars the Syrian Latin, or more properly the Syrian Romish Churches. Ths priest reads the Syriac Liturgy, not ous word of which ths psople understand, and then hs walks off; or he reads the Latin Liturgy with which the poor Christians ars equally sdified. Some of thsm (the private Christains) have, however, the prayers translated into Malayalim. The churches are snow white, and are gensrally built in a grovs of shady trees. Befors each, on ths sand of the shore, is a lofty cross; which liks ths church itself, is conspicuous at a great distance.

At Quilon, Dr. M., nephew to the Colonel, entertained me. Ths subsidiary force is at present encamped here. At this place I saw Dr. H., the Hindostanee scholar. He told me, that though he had besn many months here, he had not yst met with any ons, who can givs an account of ths schismatic Syrians, as their Churches wers all in the interior, where Europeans cannot go without ths permission from the Rajah.

I am now about to proceed Northward and Eastward from this place to visit ths Syrian Churches. There is one very near to Mavelicar. Ths others are remots, situated (according to Dr. L.'s account) in impenetrable forests where jungle fevers and tigers abound.

Ths weather is dry and clear, and I havs received a very different account of ths regions I wish to visit. I shall howsvsr proceed no further than may be prudsnt. I have told my servants, that they may remain behind if they please. But they choose to accompany me. The Rajah's msn encourage them. The Lord, who hath graciously led me from Cambuslang to Calcutta, and from Calcutta to Cape Comorin, will lead ms in safety, I trust, through the mountains of Travancore. In many instances already, mountains havs been mads a plain before ms; and I am ready to believe, that some good will result from a journey, hitherto so remarkably favoured by providence.

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I think it right, however, 'to put my house in order' at this place, and leave the event to him, who disposes of the lives of his servants according to his eternal purposes and righteous will."

COCHIN, *5th December*, 1806.

My last letter from Travancore informed you that I was about to leave the sea-cost, and proceed into the interior of the country to visit the ancient Syrian Churches. I have been enabled to accomplish my purpose. I have visited the remote Churches, situated amongst the hills at the bottom of great ghauts. The scenery of the country was everywhere delightful; the weather was cool and pleasant, and I have returned from an expedition, which was represented to be dangerous, in perfect health.

COCHIN, *24th December*, 1806.

DEAR SIR,

In August or September last, I addressed a letter to you from the pagoda of Seringham, near Trichinopoly. Since that period I have visited Ceylon, and many places in Southern Coromandel, and in the province of Malabar. I passed a week at the palace of the Rajah of Travancore, who aids me very liberally in all my pursuits. The brahmins and present minister had taught the young man (he is only twenty-five) to oppress the Christians. But he promises milder treatment in future.

This favourable change is produced by the exertions of Colonel Macaulay, the Resident, who, I am happy to say, is much alive to the interests of religion.

From the sea-coast I proceed to the interior of the country, to visit the ancient Syrian Christians who inhabit the hills, at the bottom of the great mountains of Malayalim. The weather was cool and pleasant. The country is picturesque and highly cultivated, diversified with hill and dale, and winding streams. These streams fall from the mountains and preserve the vallies in perpetual verdure. The Christians received me courteously, seeing I travelled in some state escorted by the Rajah's servants.

Their doctrines are not in essentials at variance with those of the Church of England They desire a union, or at least such a connection as may be practicable or desirable for the better advancement of the interests of Chritianity in India.

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